

*\*Please note: All articles are available in the attached PDF.*

*\*To receive the Daily News Digest in your inbox, email [R6Press@epa.gov](mailto:R6Press@epa.gov).*

**1 — Study to determine number of red snapper in Gulf of Mexico, Times Picayune, 11/24/17**

[http://www.nola.com/environment/index.ssf/2017/11/study to determine number of r.html#incart river index](http://www.nola.com/environment/index.ssf/2017/11/study-to-determine-number-of-red-snapper-in-gulf-of-mexico.html#incart=river-index)

A team of 21 scientists will conduct a study to estimate the number of red snapper in the U.S. waters of the Gulf of Mexico. The panel of researchers from universities and state and federal agencies was convened by the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, and awarded \$9.5 million in federal funds, The Sun Herald reported. The project will receive another \$2.5 million from the universities.

**2 — S. African firm drops plan for \$14 billion Lake Charles plant, Times Picayune, 11/24/17**

[http://www.nola.com/business/index.ssf/2017/11/s african firm drops plan for.html#incart river index](http://www.nola.com/business/index.ssf/2017/11/south-african-firm-drops-plan-for-lake-charles-plant.html#incart=river-index)

Low oil prices and a volatile market are prompting a South African energy and chemical company to drop plans for an \$11 billion to \$14 billion U.S. plant in Mossville, just outside of Lake Charles, to convert natural gas to liquid fuels and to pull out of Canadian shale. "Sasol will not invest in further greenfields gas-to-liquids projects," the company said Thursday in a news release posted on its website. Its current GTL plants "are generating good returns and cash flows," but new projects aren't worth it in the current market, the statement said.

**3 — Tangle of oil pipelines adds to cost of barrier island restoration project, Times Picayune, 11/24/17**

[http://www.nola.com/environment/index.ssf/2017/11/coastal restoration project re.html#incart river index](http://www.nola.com/environment/index.ssf/2017/11/coastal-restoration-project-requires-extra-cost-due-to-oil-pipelines.html#incart=river-index)

n already expensive coastal restoration project needed an extra \$2.2 million to deal with unexpected complexities posed by a tangle of buried oil and gas pipelines. The state-led effort to rebuild East Timbalier Island, part of a chain of barrier islands protecting marshlands in Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes, ran into an extensive network of active and abandoned oil wells and pipelines, much of it poorly mapped.

**4 — Mexico creates marine reserve around islands called 'Galapagos of North America', Reuters, 11/24/17**

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mexico-environment/mexico-creates-marine-reserve-around-islands-called-galapagos-of-north-america-idUSKBN1D02MQ>

Mexico's government has created a marine park the size of Illinois in the Pacific, the largest ocean reserve in North America for the conservation of giant rays, whales and turtles, including dozens of species endemic to the area. Mexico's President Enrique Pena Nieto designated on Friday the Revillagigedo Archipelago, located some 390 km (242 miles) southeast of the Baja California peninsula, as a national park.

**5 — Keystone XL fight heading to courts, Chron, 11/21/17**

<http://www.chron.com/business/energy/article/Keystone-XL-fight-heading-to-courts-12373781.php>

When is a win not a win? When it promises to open up fertile new areas of potential litigation. That's the view of Keystone XL's opponents after Nebraska regulators approved the project's construction there, but mandated that it follow an alternative route to TransCanada Corp.'s preferred path.

**6 — As Houston Moves On From Harvey, Scientists Dig In For The Long Haul, 11/22/17**

<http://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/energy-environment/2017/11/26/252551/as-houston-moves-on-from-harvey-scientists-dig-in-for-the-long-haul/>

As Houston continues dealing with the impacts of Hurricane Harvey, officials are focused on how to bolster the city against the next big storm. But alongside the forward-looking talk about a new reservoir or more cautious development, there's an effort underway to look back at the storm more closely. Scientists are just starting to explore how Harvey changed the physical world around us.

**7 — THEIR LIVES WERE UPENDED BY HARVEY, BUT THANKSGIVING GOES ON, Texas Standard, 11/23/17**

<http://www.texasstandard.org/stories/categories/energy-environment/>

It's Thanksgiving morning and if you're like most people, that probably means a football game on television, a turkey in the oven and a gaggle of family members on the way. But for some Texans still displaced by Hurricane Harvey, Thanksgiving this year doesn't feel, look, or even smell the same. An hour east of Houston, tucked behind the busy highway is a large, well-kept neighborhood in Baytown, Texas. That's where Jessica and David Vass live.

**8 — Flood insurance reforms split Congress, and Louisiana lawmakers, as Dec. 8 expiration looms, Baton Rouge Advocate, 11/21/17**

<http://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/article/Black-smoke-from-recycling-plant-blaze-draws-fire-12374950.php?ipid=houstonhomepage>

A heavy plume of black smoke billowing from a recycling plant near the Port of Houston drew fire crews to the scene Tuesday afternoon.

**9 — Agency draws 17 remarks on water, Ark. Democrat Gazette, 11/26/17**

<http://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2017/nov/26/agency-draws-17-remarks-on-water-201711/>

Concerns about the Buffalo River and available data figured prominently in comments submitted to the state's environmental agency about its amended plan to assess water bodies. The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality is reworking the guidelines it uses to determine if a body of water is impaired. Impaired water bodies are reported to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

**10 — 'Limited impact' seen near hog farm, Ark. Democrat Gazette, 11/27/17**

<http://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2017/nov/27/limited-impact-seen-near-hog-farm-400-0/>

Researchers in the University of Arkansas System say the stream next to C&H Hog Farms in Newton County has phosphorous and nitrogen levels akin to other similar streams in northern Arkansas. In a research letter published this fall in Agricultural & Environmental Letters, researchers working on the Big Creek Research and Extension Team examining C&H's environmental impact wrote their finding suggests "limited impact" of C&H on Big Creek. But longer-term research is needed, they wrote.

**11 — Nuclear plant strives to replace retiring workforce, Victoria Advocate, 11/26/17**

<https://www.victoriaadvocate.com/news/2017/nov/26/nuclear-plant-in-its-second-generation-of-families/>

Years ago, a Palacios High School student told a packed auditorium about how science, technology, engineering and math piqued her interest. Then-Gov. Rick Perry was in the audience to present the school with a check to encourage other students' interest in the subjects.

**12 EPA accepts new Arroyo watershed management plan, The Herald, 11/26/17**

[http://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/valley/epa-accepts-new-arroyo-watershed-management-plan/article\\_161da8b8-d327-11e7-aea4-db50f2bd0461.html](http://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/valley/epa-accepts-new-arroyo-watershed-management-plan/article_161da8b8-d327-11e7-aea4-db50f2bd0461.html)

A new and improved plan to protect the Arroyo Colorado watershed has won the approval of the Environmental Protection Agency. The green-lighting by the EPA means the new study replaces one adopted in 2007 and will provide a framework for cleaning up the heavily polluted waterway, which also serves as a key flood-control feature for the Rio GrandeValley.

**13 Opponents of methane delay gather as lawmakers, industry reps disagree on Four Corners methane emissions, Daily Times, 11/26/17**

<http://www.daily-times.com/story/money/industries/oil-gas/2017/11/26/opponents-methane-delay-gather-lawmakers-industry-reps-disagree-four-corners-methane-emissions/867616001/>

Discussions over a contentious rule regarding methane emissions flared up again over the past weeks as the Bureau of Land Management ended a public comment period on an 18-month delay of a rule meant to curb emissions from venting, flaring and leaks.

**14 OPINION: How one Trump nominee combined environmental quality and economic development, Washington Examiner, 11/27/17**

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/how-one-trump-nominee-combined-environmental-quality-and-economic-development/article/2641444>

Throughout Kathleen Hartnett White's six-year tenure at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and in subsequent years thereafter, she has demonstrated thoughtful and effective regulatory insights and practice. Kathleen has been nominated by President Trump to chair the White House Council on Environmental Quality, and she is being questioned and challenged – not for her record, and not for her qualifications, but because she has refused to define environmental quality and economic development as mutually exclusive.

**15 Pharr to boast new water storage tank, The Herald, 11/26/17**

[http://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/valley/pharr-to-boast-new-water-storage-tank/article\\_a83228a6-d326-11e7-92f5-77501a072acc.html](http://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/valley/pharr-to-boast-new-water-storage-tank/article_a83228a6-d326-11e7-92f5-77501a072acc.html)

The City of Pharr is making accommodations to grow with the addition of a water storage tank. The Eldora Elevated Storage Water Tank, currently under construction, will allow the city to add more water meter connections and have more water available as needed. The elevated tank will have a capacity of one million gallons and is part of the city's efforts to increase the water capacity to accommodate 10,000 additional connections and to comply with standards set by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

**16 Meeting Seeks Public Comment On Draft Restoration Plan For Environmental Damage At Chevron/Questa Site, Daily Post, 11/27/17**

<http://www.ladailypost.com/content/meeting-seeks-public-comment-draft-restoration-plan-environmental-damage-chevronquesta-site>

State and federal trustees will host a public meeting 5:30-7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 29, at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7688, 2597 State Highway 522 in Questa, to discuss the recently finalized Draft Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment ("Draft RP/EA") for the Chevron Mining Inc, Questa Mine ("Site"). The Draft RP/EA was finalized recently by the New Mexico Office of Natural Resources Trustee (ONRT), the United States Department of Agriculture (represented by the Forest Service), and the United States Department of the Interior (represented by the Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management), (collectively, the "Trustees").

**17 New websites help fight 2 environmental problems, Daily Comet, 11/26/17**

<http://www.dailycomet.com/news/20171126/new-websites-help-fight-2-environmental-problems>

LSU researchers have launched websites to help track, study and control two environmental problems affecting Terrebonne, Lafourche and much of Louisiana. Both are caused by invasive organisms:

**18 Owasso resident, organization win KOB environmental excellence awards, Tulsa World, 11/27/17**

[http://www.tulsaworld.com/communities/owasso/news/communitynews/owasso-resident-organization-win-kob-environmental-excellence-awards/article\\_74961a5f-296e-5038-a3bd-d2f4500482a5.html](http://www.tulsaworld.com/communities/owasso/news/communitynews/owasso-resident-organization-win-kob-environmental-excellence-awards/article_74961a5f-296e-5038-a3bd-d2f4500482a5.html)

Owasso resident Patricia Hardy and the Owasso Strong Neighborhood Initiative (OSNI) have been recognized by Keep Oklahoma Beautiful (KOB) for their outstanding efforts in beautifying the community. On Saturday, Nov. 18, KOB hosted its 27th annual Environmental Excellence Celebration, which celebrates the work of governments, businesses, organizations and individuals doing their part to keep Oklahoma beautiful.

**19 Scott Pruitt on a mission to change the culture of the EPA, KSDK, 11/26/17**

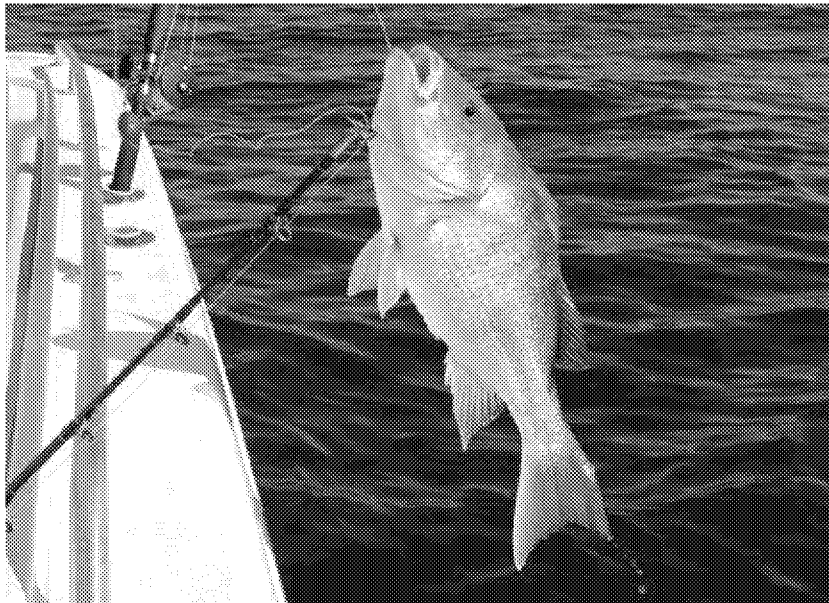
<http://www.ksdk.com/article/news/nation-now/scott-pruitt-on-a-mission-to-change-the-culture-of-the-epa/465-65ed271b-d6e6-4165-88d0-caceec642d2f?scroll=0>

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt isn't just dismantling the Clean Power Plan and other high-profile environmental programs of the Obama era. He's on a mission to re-engineer the agency's culture by returning power to states and away from the Washington bureaucrats and coastal elites he said have led it astray.

LOUISIANA ENVIRONMENT AND FLOOD CONTROL

## Study to determine number of red snapper in Gulf of Mexico

Updated Nov 24;  
Posted Nov 24



A study will estimate the number of red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico.  
(NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune)

1

332  
shares

**By The Associated Press**

OCEAN SPRINGS, Miss. -- A team of 21 scientists will conduct a study to estimate the number of red snapper in the U.S. waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

The panel of researchers from universities and state and federal agencies was convened by the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, and awarded \$9.5 million in federal funds, The Sun Herald reported. The project will receive another \$2.5 million from the universities.

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross highlighted the important of access to and long-term sustainability of red snapper to Gulf communities.

"American communities across the Gulf of Mexico depend on their access to, as well as the longterm sustainability of, red snapper," Ross said in a statement announcing the formation of the team. "I look forward to the insights this project will provide as we study and manage this valuable resource."

Area fishermen have long criticized federal estimates of red snapper, saying they result in unnecessarily short seasons.

Project leader Greg Stunz of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, says the scientists hope to work with local fishermen.

"We've assembled some of the best red snapper scientists around for this study," Stunz said. "The team members assembled through this process are ready to address this challenging research question. There are lots of constituents who want an independent abundance estimate that will be anxiously awaiting our findings."

---

---

Members of the research team also include Sean P. Powers of the University of South Alabama and Dauphin Island Sea Lab; James Cowan of Louisiana State University; Matthew Catalano of Auburn University; Marcus Drymon of Mississippi State University; Brett Falterman of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries; Robert Leaf of the University of Southern Mississippi; and Eric Saillant of the University of Southern Mississippi, among others.

Several Floridians are also part of the team, including Will Patterson, Robert Ahrens and Vincent Lecours of the University of Florida; Kevin Boswell, Florida International University; and Steven Murawski of the University of South Florida.



---

Registration on or use of this site constitutes acceptance of our **User Agreement** and **Privacy Policy**

© 2017 NOLA Media Group. All rights reserved (**About Us**).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of NOLA Media Group.

**Community Rules** apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

▶ **Ad Choices**



NEW ORLEANS BUSINESS NEWS

## S. African firm drops plan for \$14 billion Lake Charles plant

Updated Nov 24;  
Posted Nov 24

21

313  
shares

**By The Associated Press**

Low oil prices and a volatile market are prompting a South African energy and chemical company to drop plans for an \$11 billion to \$14 billion U.S. plant in Mossville, just outside of Lake Charles, to convert natural gas to liquid fuels and to pull out of Canadian shale.

"Sasol will not invest in further greenfields gas-to-liquids projects," the company said Thursday in a news release posted on its website. Its current GTL plants "are generating good returns and cash flows," but new projects aren't worth it in the current market, the statement said.

The company had announced in January that it was delaying final investment plans for the plant near Lake Charles because of a collapse in world oil prices.

"I hate to see ... that the gas to liquids project is not being able to happen," but it's a minor setback in \$100 billion in development across southwest Louisiana, said Calcasieu Parish Police Juror Hal McMillin. He said that includes an \$11.1 billion ethane cracker being built by Sasol, which has an ethylene plant, an alumina plant and an alcohol plant operating in the area.

The ethane cracker will turn a component of natural gas into ethylene, used in the chemical industry. State officials have said it is expected to create 500 permanent jobs, with construction jobs peaking at 5,000.

"Sasol is still doing a number of great things in southwest Louisiana," said McMillin, who worked for 23 years at a plant originally owned by Conoco, then by Vista, and now by Sasol.

---

Sasol says it will sell its shale assets in Canada's Montney Basin because a review of more than half its global assets found Canadian shale gas to be "non-core."

"The majority of the company's assets will be retained and clear improvement actions have been defined for each," it said.

Story by Janet McConnaughey, Associated Press staff writer.

---

Registration on or use of this site constitutes acceptance of our **User Agreement** and **Privacy Policy**

© 2017 NOLA Media Group. All rights reserved (**About Us**).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of NOLA Media Group.

**Community Rules** apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

▶ **Ad Choices**

LOUISIANA ENVIRONMENT AND FLOOD CONTROL

# Tangle of oil pipelines adds to cost of barrier island restoration project

Updated Nov 24;

Posted Nov 24

3

218  
shares

By **Tristan Baurick**, [tbaurick@nola.com](mailto:tbaurick@nola.com),

NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune

An already expensive coastal restoration project needed an extra \$2.2 million to deal with unexpected complexities posed by a tangle of buried oil and gas pipelines.

The state-led effort to rebuild East Timbalier Island, part of a chain of barrier islands protecting marshlands in Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes, ran into an extensive network of active and abandoned oil wells and pipelines, much of it poorly mapped.

"It looks like a spiderweb of lines," said Kenneth Bahlinger, the project's manager.

The long and narrow island, about 35 miles southeast of Houma, has one of the highest erosion rates on the Louisiana coast, losing about 70 feet per year in recent decades. Its loss would expose fragile wetlands and hundreds of oil wells in Terrebonne and Timbalier bays to hurricanes and storm surges. The island also protects Port Fourchon, a key land link for many offshore oil and gas facilities.

Since the early 1990s, about \$11.2 million has been spent restoring dunes and marshes on the 150-acre island. Now the state Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority is planning a more ambitious project, spending about \$160 million to rebuild the island with sand mined from Ship Shoal, a vast sandbank under the Gulf. The two-year project will re-create about 460 acres of marsh and dune.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, a Washington, D.C. environmental nonprofit group, had already contributed \$5.6 million to jump-start the project's planning and engineer work. This month, it agreed to a CPRA request to add another \$2.2 million to cover "engineering and design complexities resulting from the significant oil and gas infrastructure present at the site."

---

---

The island has been heavily used by the oil and gas industry for decades. Once the property of various oil companies, the island is now owned by the state, but production is still underway through state oil leases.

East Timbalier likely has more oil flowlines than any other barrier island on the Louisiana coast, Bahlinger said. The island and the waters around it have about 150 oil and gas wells, according to records maintained by the state Department of Natural Resources.

Some of the pipelines and wells are active, some are abandoned. Ownership of the infrastructure is spread across several companies, many of which shut down or were bought up by bigger companies a long time ago.

"To track ownership, we had to go to the courthouses and parishes that keep the old records," Bahlinger said.

The density of pipelines means CPRA can't dredge or dike the area, as it has on similar restoration projects. Doing so might cause an oil spill, fouling an area they're trying to restore.

"There'll be no digging because of the pipelines," Bahlinger said. "We don't want to take any chances."

In September, a contractor restoring another barrier island - Chenier Ronquille Island on the edge of Barataria Bay - accidentally cut a pipeline, releasing 5,250 gallons of crude oil. It's this sort of problem Bahlinger hopes to avoid.

The foundation's contribution to the East Timbalier project is part of the money paid by BP and oil rig owner Transocean to settle criminal cases over the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil disaster. About \$1.27 billion of the settlement was paid into the foundation's Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund for use on barrier island restoration and river diversion projects in Louisiana.

In a statement, Thomas Kelsch, one of the fund's managers, said it's "not uncommon" for the foundation to receive requests for additional money, particularly for projects that "encounter conditions that were not originally anticipated."

---

---

Kelsch called East Timbalier "one of the most complex barrier island restoration projects to date."

CPRA plans to tap the fund for much or all of the project.

Gov. John Bel Edwards issued a statement praising CPRA for acquiring the additional \$2.2 million.

"This is another significant step to help advance this important project as part of Louisiana's continuing efforts to restore our coast from damages caused by the BP oil spill," he said.

CPRA plans to begin work on East Timbalier early next year. Completion is slated for sometime in 2020.

*Tristan Baurick covers Louisiana's coastal environment for NOLA.com / The Times-Picayune. Email: [tbaurick@nola.com](mailto:tbaurick@nola.com) \* Twitter: [@tristanbaurick](https://twitter.com/tristanbaurick) \* Facebook: [Tristan Baurick](#) and [Louisiana Coastal Watch](#).*



---

Registration on or use of this site constitutes acceptance of our **User Agreement** and **Privacy Policy**

© 2017 NOLA Media Group. All rights reserved (**About Us**).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of NOLA Media Group.

**Community Rules** apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

▶ **Ad Choices**



#ENVIRONMENT

NOVEMBER 24, 2017 / 4:15 PM / 3 DAYS AGO

## Mexico creates marine reserve around islands called 'Galapagos of North America'

Reuters Staff



MEXICO CITY (Reuters) - Mexico's government has created a marine park the size of Illinois in the Pacific, the largest ocean reserve in North America for the conservation of giant rays, whales and turtles, including dozens of species endemic to the area.

Mexico's President Enrique Pena Nieto designated on Friday the Revillagigedo Archipelago, located some 390 km (242 miles) southeast of the Baja California peninsula, as a national park.

The four volcanic islands that make up the Revillagigedo Archipelago and the surrounding waters are home to hundreds of species of animals and plants, including rays, humpback whales, sea turtles, lizards and migratory birds.

The archipelago is sometimes known as the Galapagos of North America, in reference to the volcanic Ecuadorean islands whose abundance of endemic species inspired biologist Charles Darwin.

The 148,000 square kilometers (57,143 square miles) area is a breeding ground for commercially fished species such as tuna and sierra.

Now all fishing activities will be prohibited, as well as the construction of hotel infrastructure on the islands.

The Environment Ministry and Navy “will carry out surveillance, equipment and training activities that will include remote monitoring in real time, environmental education directed at fishermen and sanctions against offenders,” said Pena Nieto.

The creation of the marine park is expected to help recover fish populations hit hard by commercial fishing and was praised by the World Wildlife Fund and British billionaire Richard Branson.

Reporting by Anthony Esposito; Editing by Lisa Shumaker

Our Standards: [The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles.](#)

[Apps](#) [Newsletters](#) [Reuters Plus](#) [Advertising Guidelines](#) [Cookies](#) [Terms of Use](#) [Privacy](#)



All quotes delayed a minimum of 15 minutes. See [here](#) for a complete list of exchanges and delays.

© 2017 Reuters. All Rights Reserved.







<http://www.chron.com/business/energy/article/Keystone-XL-fight-heading-to-courts-12373781.php>

## Keystone XL fight heading to courts

Meenal Vamburkar and Andrew Harris Published 6:40 am, Tuesday, November 21, 2017



IMAGE 1 OF 3

### When is a win not a win?

When it promises to open up fertile new areas of potential litigation. That's the view of Keystone XL's opponents after Nebraska regulators approved the project's construction there, but mandated that it follow an alternative route to TransCanada Corp.'s preferred path.

Because the new route wasn't vetted at the same level as the original, foes believe it will let them challenge the project in ways they couldn't before, further delaying construction that's been on the drawing boards since 2008.

**RELATED:** Nebraska commission approves Keystone XL

It is "an incredible victory," said Brian Jorde, an attorney for landowners who have opposed the project for seven years, in a telephone interview. The regulators approved a route the company said was inferior, according to Jorde. "They won nothing," he said.

The Nebraska Public Service Commission approved TransCanada's project on a three-to-two vote, removing one of the last hurdles to the Calgary-based company's construction of the \$8 billion, 1,179-mile (1,897-kilometer) conduit. The adjusted route, though, created new complications.

The biggest may be that the last-minute change deprived landowners along the alternative route of due process to argue their case before the state commission, said Katie Bays, an analyst at Height Securities LLC in Washington.

### Due Process

"By making this a due process issue, you can involve a federal court," Bay said in a telephone interview, adding, "I think that's the goal. If you can make it a federal issue, you have possibly a chance of a more favorable panel."

Parties have 30 days to file an appeal in Nebraska, said Bold Alliance, an environmental advocacy group opposing the project, in a statement. They may also petition the PSC for a rehearing within 10 days of the decision.

The State Department is reviewing the extent of the Nebraska route changes with an eye toward potential impacts to its March 24 presidential permit authorizing the construction of pipeline facilities at the U.S.-Canadian border in Montana. In an emailed statement, the State Department called the Nebraska Public Service Commission's decision "another step in this process" of authorizing Keystone XL.

Substantive changes could trigger new environmental analysis, required under federal law. The State Department previously prolonged the federal government's examination of the project, after a February 2014 ruling by a district court threw the route through Nebraska into doubt.

Tom Steyer, the billionaire environmentalist and Democratic mega donor, said the Nebraska approval "is going to turn out to be an incredibly stupid decision." He called

Keystone XL "a dangerous pipeline in terms of leaks."

## Formal Decision

With Nebraska's go-ahead in hand, TransCanada still must formally decide whether to proceed with construction on the line, which would send crude from Hardisty, Alberta, through Montana and South Dakota to Nebraska, where it will connect to pipelines leading to U.S. Gulf Coast refineries.

The company's open season for gauging producers' interest closed late last month, and TransCanada executives have indicated that they've secured enough shipping commitments to make the project commercially worthwhile.

Still, TransCanada's Russ Girling was less than effusive in support of the decision. The company is now "assessing how the decision would impact the cost and schedule of the project," Girling, the company's chief executive officer, said in a statement.

The uncertainty expressed by Girling was quickly reflected in analyst notes. While a new route is unlikely to add significant costs, it's unclear what delays the change in route may spur, Barclays Capital analysts led by Paul Cheng said in a research report.

"Given uncertainty as to what this implies in terms of project cost and timeline, as well as the high probability of additional legal delays, we think that, while the ruling is clearly a necessary step in the right direction, there will still be a lack of certainty surrounding the project for some time," the note said.

## No Certainty

Gavin MacFarlane, a vice president at Moody's Investors Service, was more straightforward: The decision, he wrote in a note, "does not provide certainty that the project will ultimately be built and begin operating."

Prior to Monday's vote, Commissioner Crystal Rhoades hinted at the challenges ahead in announcing she would oppose the project. The alternative route needed more study on both the state and federal level, she said, and it failed to give landowners along that different path the ability to address the commission. As an example, she said Nebraska's

Department of Environmental Quality didn't analyze the alternative route at all in its 2013 report.

"It is clear" TransCanada "never intended it to be considered," Rhoades said.

The commissioners who supported the route change said it would impact fewer threatened and endangered species, fewer wells, less irrigated cropland, and that it included one less river crossing.

Additionally, they wrote, "it is in the public interest for the pipelines to be in closer proximity to each other, so as to maximize monitoring resources and increase the efficiency of response times" with "issues that may arise with either pipeline."

The decision came just days after a major spill on TransCanada's existing Keystone line in South Dakota on Thursday sparked new attacks by environmentalists who pointed to the event as something Nebraska could expect if the project was approved.

In its post-hearing brief, TransCanada told the panel its "preferred route was the product of literally years of study, analysis and refinement by Keystone, federal agencies and Nebraska agencies," and that no alternate route, even one paralleling the Keystone mainline as the approved path does, was truly comparable.

One economic argument for the pipeline has been growing in just the last two years.

Producers in the Alberta oil sands region and elsewhere in Western Canada are facing pipeline bottlenecks, forcing increased volumes onto rail cars. Since rail is a more expensive form of transport, heavy Canadian crude prices will need to trade at a bigger discount to West Texas Intermediate futures.

That discount widened to more than \$15 a barrel Monday from less than \$10 in August. Keystone XL construction, along with Kinder Morgan Inc.'s Trans Mountain expansion and Enbridge Inc.'s Line 3 expansion, could narrow the gap to less than \$10 by early next decade, Tim Pickering, chief investment officer at Auspice Capital Advisors Ltd., said in a telephone interview.

The pipeline may also be more commercially viable given declining heavy oil production in Mexico and ongoing instability in Venezuela, said Zachary Rogers, a refining and oil



markets research analyst at Wood Mackenzie, said in a statement. Canadian producers are an alternate source of heavy crude for U.S. Gulf Coast refiners.

Brett Harris, a spokesman for Calgary-based Cenovus Energy Inc., a committed oil-sands shipper on the proposed pipeline, said the approval "is in the best interest of the industry, best interest of Canada and the best interest of the U.S. as well. We are pleased to see that decision."

Dennis McConaghy, former executive vice president of corporate development at TransCanada, said he believes the company has secured the volume needed to make the project economically viable. He expect senior management to announce they will go ahead with the project by year's end with construction by the later half of 2019, he said. Completion of the line would come a couple years later.

But McConaghy added, "there is no question there is going to be all kinds of legal obstruction that will be resorted to by opponents."

Nebraska's decision overrode the objections of environmental groups, Native American tribes and landowners along the pipeline's prospective route. The project had the support of the state's governor, Republican Pete Ricketts, its chamber of commerce, trade unions and the petroleum industry.

"The PSC followed a transparent and fair process as they made their decision," Ricketts said in a statement. "While TransCanada's preferred route was not selected, I understand that the company is reviewing the PSC's decision, and hope that they bring this job-creating project to Nebraska."

Attached Media

© 2017 Hearst Communications, Inc.

**HEARST**

**DONATE**

TV 8

NEWS 88.7

CLASSICAL

MIXTAPE

**LISTEN LIVE****2017 GALVESTON BAY REPORT CARD**[Click here to learn about  
WATER QUALITY](#)

ENERGY &amp; ENVIRONMENT

# As Houston Moves On From Harvey, Scientists Dig In For The Long Haul

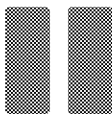
Millions of dollars in grants are going to Harvey-related research projects that are just getting underway

**TRAVIS BUBENIK** | NOVEMBER 26, 2017, 7:00 AM



Travis Bubenik

Lisa Montameyor, with the Houston Health Department, conducts water quality sampling in Brays Bayou.



00:04 / 03:57

As Houston continues dealing with the impacts of [Hurricane Harvey](#), officials are focused on how to bolster the city against the next big st

But alongside the forward-looking talk about a new reservoir or more cautious development, there's an effort underway to look back at the more closely. Scientists are just starting to explore how Harvey changed the physical world around us.

Off a busy road near the Texas Medical Center, Lisa Montemayor with the city's health department is collecting water samples. She reaches a bridge and lowers what looks like a big thermometer into Brays Bayou.

"It's going to give us the temperature, the pH, the dissolved oxygen," she explained.

It will be a couple days to a week before the lab results on the water samples she gathered come back, giving her a picture of the bayou's quality. Still, Montemayor said researchers do have a basic understanding of the storm's overall impact.

"The most consistent issue we saw across the city were high bacteria levels, specifically high E. coli levels," she said. "And we saw those several weeks in some of our bayous, and in other bayous we saw a return back to normal levels after a few days."



Travis Bubenik

Lisa Montameyor, with the Houston Health Department, conducts water quality sampling in Brays Bayou.

There is still plenty that researchers don't yet know.

For example, the city still needs to review test results from pollution sampling near industrial areas and a couple contaminated "Superfund

"We just want to make sure that we didn't have any breaches of linings or reason to be concerned about contaminants leaking from those  
Montemayor said.

State and federal regulators have said only the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund raised major concerns after the storm.

The degree to which Harvey spread pollution is among the many issues scientists are looking into. The National Science Foundation rec  
awarded millions of dollars in grants for researchers to study everything from the impact on sediment and fish in Galveston Bay, to the tox  
stormwater runoff.

The University of Houston's Hanadi Rifai is among those who sprang into action while the city was still flooded.

"We started literally a couple days after [the] hurricane ended," she said.

The new funding is allowing her team to look for signs of highly-toxic pollution that might have flowed into the city's bayous.

"We're looking at things like the presence of metals, we're looking at things like the presence of industrial pollutants, like polychlorinated  
biphenyls and dioxins," she said. "That's really the longer-term, it stays in the sediment for a long, long time."

The way Rifai describes it, this kind of research can help reveal some of Harvey's impacts that might otherwise be hard to notice.

"The spills and leaks and releases that occur during these events, they always leave a footprint behind that is longer-lasting than the storm  
other effects from the storm," she said.

"I think the information that we have right now is just the tip of the iceberg," said Lisa Gonzalez, CEO of the Houston Advanced Research

According to the center, Harvey created a "legacy of health concerns" that will "linger for years to come." Toxins, viruses and bacteria were found in the floodwaters, along with millions of gallons of untreated sewage.

The storm's flooding was unprecedented, which raises the question of whether the environmental fallout will be as well. The Gulf Coast has adapted to extremes, Gonzalez said, but the region's ever-growing population and development makes for a blurry future.

"These ecosystems that have been altered, re-engineered, stressed – do they still have the ability to adapt, and be resilient, to these type disturbances?" Gonzalez wondered.

As scientists continue their work, she noted that they are also keeping in mind how the environment might react to a "new normal" of more extreme weather.

Travis Bubenik

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT REPORTER



Travis Bubenik reports on the tangled intersections of energy and the environment in Houston and across Texas. A Houston native and proud Longhorn, he returned to the Bayou City after serving as the Morning Edition Host & Reporter for KPRC Public Radio in Far West Texas. Bubenik was previously the...

More Information

RECENT STORIES

Texas Researchers Find Harmful Bacteria In Groundwater Near Natural Gas Wells

Will The 'Digital Oilfield' Still Need Roughnecks?

Harris County Sues The Arkema Chemical Plant In Crosby

WATCH: Investigators Say Harvey Chemical Plant Fires Should Be Wake-Up Call For Industry

Despite A 'Downturn,' West Texas Oil Production Expected To Hit A Record High



## STAND WITH AMERICA'S MOST TRUSTED MEDIA.

1.5 million people turn to Houston Public Media each week to access our award-winning dramas, curriculum-based children programming and front row seats to the arts for everyone. **Now is the time to become a member.**

**JOIN TODAY**



Support Comes From

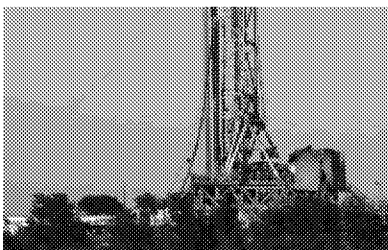
#### RELATED



Harvey Has Changed Holiday Plans In Houston



Armando Walle Will Run For Re-Election To Texas House Of Representatives



Texas Researchers Find Harmful Bacteria In Groundwater Near Natural Gas Wells



The Alley Theatre Returns Home For The Holidays With "A Christmas Carol"

#### MOST VIEWED

As Houston Moves On From Harvey, Scientists Dig In For The Long Haul

WATCH Thanksgiving Ideas 3: Chef Kaiser Lashkari From Himalaya Restaurant Makes Grilled Fish Masala

Texas' First Medical Cannabis Dispensary Set To Open In December

Fort Bend Owner Of Anti-Trump Bumper Sticker Is Now Selling Them

Houston Houses Of Worship Struggle To Stay Welcoming With An Eye On Security

Support Comes From



# Houston Public Media

A SERVICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON



[News](#)

[Arts & Culture](#)

[Education](#)

[TV 8](#)

[News 88.7](#)

[Classical](#)

[About](#)

[Contact Us](#)

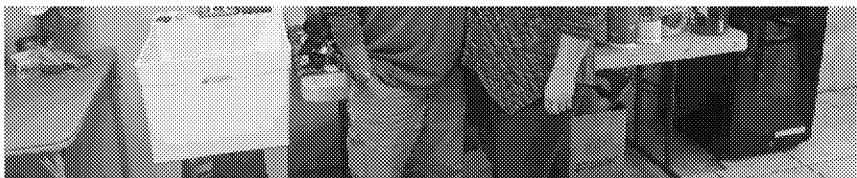
Houston Public Media is supported with your gifts to the Houston Public Media Foundation and is licensed to the [University of Houston](#)

Copyright © 2017 | [Privacy Policy](#)



# THEIR LIVES WERE UPENDED BY HARVEY, BUT THANKSGIVING GOES ON

Some southeast Texans will hold smaller celebrations than usual, and others will share a meal with neighbors who lost more than they did.



*Marissa Cummings/Houston Public Media*

David and Jessica Vass say their Thanksgiving celebration will be scaled back this year, since many of their possessions are in storage. The couple's home in Baytown was damaged by Hurricane Harvey.

---

An hour east of Houston, tucked behind the busy highway is a large, well-kept neighborhood in Baytown, Texas. That's where Jessica and David Vass live.

"I love holidays! I have decorations for every holiday," Jessica Vass says. "We do it right. We've got all kinds of stuff. We decorate the yard, the door, the everything."

But this year all those decorations are in storage because their house got flooded by Harvey, with up to a foot of water in some places. Right now, the entire first floor of their two-story home has freshly installed drywall panels, four feet high. The few miscellaneous items that weren't put in storage sit on foldable chairs and tables throughout the kitchen and living room.

For Jessica Vass, that makes her normal Thanksgiving plans obsolete.

"The entire dining room is gone so there is no dining room table," she says. "Thanksgiving will probably be the parade downtown and maybe Buck-ee's. I don't know, we haven't planned a meal. We don't know."

Vass says she realizes this holiday season will be different, and she's determined to find a way to make it work.

"So I would be baking at this point, I would be baking preparing for the holidays," she says. "That's not happening. If I were to do a green bean casserole in my one casserole dish then I couldn't do a sweet potato casserole. So I'm going to need to get some of those disposable tin things."

And the Vass family says they realize their situation could have been worse and are thankful for what they do have.

Thirty-five miles northwest of Baytown is Kingwood. And for some people there the situation was worse. Water released from Lake Conroe rose to 14 feet in some places.

---

He says the more the merrier.

"The event is open to everyone," he says. "We will not turn anyone away. We have plenty of food. We have one caterer, Noah's Kitchen who is bringing 500-plus meals, and we have other donated food we will be serving as well."

Further south of Kingwood, the Houston Food Bank is doing more this season to make sure people don't go without a meal either.

"On a normal month we distribute 6 to 7 million pounds. Going into November it's been about two times what we normal distribute when it comes to pounds," says Amy Ragan with the food bank.

"We are definitely going to be distributing more holiday boxes to more clients who are going to need them for the holidays," Ragan says.

On average, she says the Houston Food Bank gets help from 6,000 volunteers in a month but that has increased to 24,000 a month since the storm. Ragan says the season of giving began as soon as Harvey happened.

## TELL IT LIKE IT IS

[Tweet @TexasStandard](#)  
or [leave a comment here](#)

Name

Email

What do you think?

COMMENT

---

NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE,  
YOU'RE ON TEXAS STANDARD TIME

©2014 Texas Standard. A service of the Moody College of Communication at the University of Texas at Austin

[http://www.theadvocate.com/baton\\_rouge/news/politics/article\\_f06bed90-d147-11e7-a94c-f74e9e62edef.html](http://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/politics/article_f06bed90-d147-11e7-a94c-f74e9e62edef.html)

# Flood insurance reforms split Congress, and Louisiana lawmakers, as Dec. 8 expiration looms

BY BRYN STOLE | [BSTOLE@THEADVOCATE.COM](mailto:BSTOLE@THEADVOCATE.COM) NOV 26, 2017 - 2:07 PM



Aerial of severe flooding of the Comite River near Zachary in East Baton Rouge Parish on Sunday August 14, 2016.

Advocate file photo by BILL FEIG < p>

[Buy Now](#)

Bryn Stole

**WASHINGTON** — After months of grinding negotiations over the future of the National Flood Insurance Program, lawmakers return to Capitol Hill on Monday with less than two weeks before the program expires.

Despite progress in the U.S. House of Representatives before Congress split town for its Thanksgiving break, deep and longstanding divisions remain over the federal program, which is heavily in debt and now facing billions in claims from victims of a spate of destructive hurricanes this year.

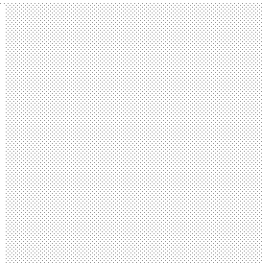
Members of Congress and those keeping a close eye on the flood insurance debate are increasingly expecting the Dec. 8 deadline to come and go without a comprehensive, long-term reauthorization for the program.

*Story Continued Below*

Instead, most are now hoping for a shorter deal to temporarily extend the program — possibly for six months or a year — to buy more time for negotiations on a more comprehensive set of reforms.

That's what Congress did in September with a three-month reauthorization. Lawmakers at the time said they hoped to pull together a deal by December — but there's now little indication they're much closer, despite the House vote.

Senators have shown little interest in taking up a flood insurance bill passed on Nov. 14 by their colleagues in the House. The bill was the product of a hard-fought compromise between House Majority Whip Steve Scalise, R-Jefferson, and Rep. Jeb Hensarling, R-Texas, a fiscal hawk and the bill's primary author.



### **Steve Scalise strikes deal with key congressman on National Flood Insurance Program's future**

"It's a good start," said Sen. John Kennedy, R-Madisonville, "But I think we (in the Senate) can do better in terms of helping the average policyholder."

Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-Baton Rouge, called the House's bill "a step in the right direction" but didn't indicate any plans to support it in the Senate.

Both Cassidy and Kennedy are co-authors of separate bills currently sitting in committee. The committee chairman, Republican Sen. Mike Crapo of Idaho, also authored a third NFIP reauthorization bill.

But there's been little public indication of progress toward passing a bill so far in the Senate. A jammed December schedule — with frenzied negotiations over GOP-backed tax cuts and a spending deal needed to avoid a government shutdown — might make it difficult to hammer out a sweeping deal on the program.

Caitlin Berni, vice president of policy and communications for Greater New Orleans Inc., viewed House passage of the bill as a positive sign toward a full reauthorization that'd be kind to Louisiana homeowners.

"Coming out of the House, we always knew we were going to have to get the bill to the least-bad position possible because of the position (Hensarling) has had on the NFIP," Berni said, whose group helped organize a coalition to lobby on flood insurance issues. "We've got a much friendlier position toward policyholders in the Senate and I think we'll get a good package."

Earlier drafts of Hensarling's bill would've immediately jacked up rates for homeowners whose properties had flooded more than once in the past while booting others from the program. Hensarling, a longtime critic of the NFIP, has denounced its current structure as fiscally unsustainable.

The proposals sparked concern from many in Louisiana and other flood-prone areas, where property owners depend heavily on the program.

Many in Louisiana pay below-market rates for flood insurance coverage under a provision known as "grandfathering," which bases premiums on a building's flood risk at the time of construction instead of accounting for rising risks since.

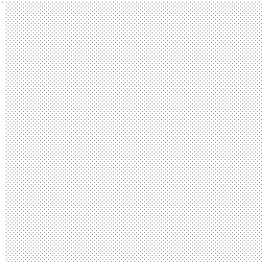
Scalise's deal with Hensarling softened a number of the bill's provisions, especially those aimed at multiple-loss properties — buildings that've flooded more than once.

The revised bill passed by the House would strip grandfathered rates after two future claims, with rates then rising 10 percent per year until hitting the current risk-rate. A third claim would see rates ratchet up at 15 percent per year.

Hensarling's original bill would have counted all past NFIP claims — including those filed by prior owners decades ago — against a property's grandfathered status and hiked rates faster.

Many homes in south Louisiana have already flooded at least once in the past, including tens of thousands of homes in Hurricane Katrina and last year's Baton Rouge-area floods.

But despite the concessions won by Scalise, the deal split Louisiana's congressional delegation. Half the state's six congressmen — Reps. Garret Graves, R-Baton Rouge, Cedric Richmond, D-New Orleans, and Ralph Abraham, R-Alto — voted against the bill because of its impact on homeowners.



### **Louisiana Congressional delegation united in skirmishes over National Flood Insurance Program**

"This bill pays for the program on the backs of those who have played by the rules without making strong enough reforms to increase participation and mitigate flood risk," Abraham said.

Graves, who also testified at a House hearing against the bill, said the bill's reforms to the flood insurance program would do little to shore up the NFIP's finances but would end up hitting Louisiana homeowners hard.

"I hope the Senate eviscerates this bill," Graves said. "It's awful policy from a financial perspective and a fairness perspective, especially to Louisiana."

Graves and a number of other flood insurance advocates have pushed to expand the program's pool of policyholders as a way of broadening the insurance risk pool and bringing in more premium dollars to pay claims.

The House bill would do the opposite, Graves said, by jacking up rates to unaffordable levels.

Graves also said a comprehensive reform of the program should include far more money for flood-prevention and mitigation work, something the congressman said would end up paying for itself by avoiding future claims.

Including money for levee projects and other flood mitigation work, however, would likely require a much broader effort in Congress because separate committees have authority over the NFIP and agencies like FEMA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

How to handle grandfathered properties has long been a core conundrum for those looking to reform the program. The subsidized, below-risk rates mean premiums for grandfathered properties are unlikely to fully cover the odds of a claim.

The 2012 Biggert-Waters Flood Reform Act had targeted grandfathered rates for elimination with a number of mechanisms designed to hike premiums to reflect a property's actual risk of flooding.

But the jaw-dropping potential premium increases some homeowners began to see — including many in south Louisiana — prompted outrage and Congress largely scrapped the Biggert-Waters reforms before they went into effect.

In a floor speech against the latest reform bill, Richmond said the legislation passed by the House was better than Biggert-Waters — but still not good enough.

"We were talking about paying 20 percent of the value of your home in flood insurance every year," he said. "It was going to cause more families to turn in the keys to their house and just give their homes back to the mortgage company or declare bankruptcy so they can just get by."

Some fiscal conservatives like Hensarling have railed against the NFIP as an unsustainable government handout. A number of environmentalists, meanwhile, have argued that the NFIP's subsidized rates encourage people to build — and rebuild — in wetlands and other high-risk areas.

But while hiking premiums and booting folks out of the program might improve the program's balance sheet going forward, it'd have a potentially devastating impact on homeowners in high-risk areas.

In Louisiana, roughly 500,000 homeowners pay grandfathered, below-risk rates, said Rick Haase, president of the New Orleans-based real estate company Latter & Blum.

Some of those families would find themselves unable to afford to stay in their homes if their flood-insurance premiums rose to risk levels, said Haase, but they'd be in a potential bind when they turned around and tried to sell.

Dramatically higher premiums — or no access to NFIP coverage at all — would significantly decrease a home's value, Haase said. For homeowners with mortgages and little equity, a sudden change to NFIP rates could leave them underwater, owing more to the bank than the home is worth.

"When you talk about the impact on Louisiana property owners, it's the equity that's been building up for years that can be destroyed very quickly," said Haase. "You're talking about destroying significant portions of a person's net worth."

Haase said one of his key concerns about reforms to the NFIP is how quickly grandfathered rates might rise. Rapid hikes, Haase said, would wipe out home values quicker and potentially leave some people trapped, unable to afford the premiums and unable sell their homes for the amount they still owe.

For some coastal communities in Louisiana, it could also spell a slow doom.

"If this isn't handled right, you'll see a slow and steady migration out of (a high-risk) community," Haase said. "In the long run, the people who can afford to leave will leave. It's the slow creation of new ghost towns."

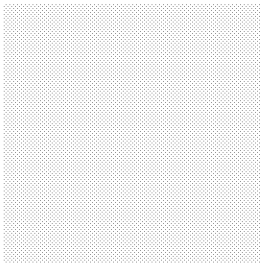
For most of Louisiana's lawmakers, eliminating grandfathered rates also goes against a sense of fairness. Most grandfathered homes were built at or above what FEMA considered a safe elevation at the time.

The risk of flooding has risen for many homes in south Louisiana for a variety of factors — coastal erosion, wetlands development, new construction and global warming.

---

**With cash running dry for National Flood Insurance Program, Congress clears billions in debt relief**





Graves, in an interview just before the Thanksgiving break, argued that, because those changes aren't a homeowner's fault, it'd be fundamentally unfair to wipe out their home equity and hit them with much higher premiums.

Doing so, several Louisiana members of Congress have argued, would be like changing the rules in the middle of a game.

"When you have people who played by the rules, bought the home of their dreams, you don't change the rules halfway to say, 'Hey, we know this was the rule when you bought the house but now it's changed and all of a sudden that \$500 in insurance you pay a month is now \$1,500,'" said Richmond. "That's not responsible, that's not fair."

Instead, Louisiana lawmakers have pitched ideas for bringing in more policyholders to the program, including stepping up enforcement of rules requiring homeowners in high-risk flood areas with federally backed mortgages to buy coverage.

Kennedy's bill would slash the fees paid to companies who sell and manage policies, while both Louisiana senators want to improve mapping to better reflect flood risk.

FOLLOW BRYN STOLE ON TWITTER, @BRYNSTOLE.

---

**THIS WEEK'S CIRCULARS**



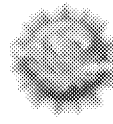
View Today's Arkansas Democrat-Gazette Print Edition

Login

Register

Subscribe Now

# ArkansasOnline

39°  
Little Rock

Search ArkansasOnline

FOLLOW US:

Home News Obituaries Business Entertainment Sports Photos Videos Features Events Classifieds Jobs Homes Autos  
 Core Values Crime Right2Know Traffic Projects Archives News Tip Whole Hog Sports Arkansas Life Place an Ad Arkansas Daily Deal

Monday, November 27, 2017, 8:33 a.m.

ADVERTISEMENT

## TOP PICKS

Arkansas Daily Deal  
 Get the best stuff in  
 Arkansas up to 90% off!  
 Sign up today!



ADVERTISEMENT

Home / News / Arkansas /

## Agency draws 17 remarks on water

Analysis of rivers, lakes reassessed

By Emily Walkenhorst

This article was published November 26, 2017 at 3:53 a.m.

1

Comments

Font Size

Concerns about the Buffalo River and available data figured prominently in comments submitted to the state's environmental agency about its amended plan to assess water bodies.

The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality is reworking the guidelines it uses to determine if a body of water is impaired. Impaired water bodies are reported to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Public comments regarding the department's draft for its methodology were accepted through Nov. 13. Department officials will respond to the comments when they finalize the methodology.

The department received 17 comments from 16 people and groups. Many asked the department to clarify portions of the document, to define phrases, and to provide rationale and formulas for certain portions. Many also expressed concern that the department's methodology would ignore data that respondents thought should be considered, or not account for issues that have occurred on the Buffalo River and its watershed.

Before the comment period, the department held six public meetings with 23 stakeholders -- including conservation, government and industry groups -- to discuss the assessment methodology and what stakeholders wanted to be included as part of it.

The department issued its draft in the fall. It includes many changes for clarity and consistency with regulations, and rules on data that will be considered. It also includes for the first time a method for analyzing continuous data, which come from frequent sampling. Previously, the methodology contained only protocol for analyzing more occasional sampling.

The National Park Service and the Arkansas Department of Health noted in their comments that the "data assembly" portion of the methodology appears to omit existing data that they consider potentially valuable.

The Health Department takes samples monthly, but the proposed changes would require that it sample more, the agency said.

"The Department of Health's bacteriological data is a consistent data source that significantly contributes to understand water quality in Arkansas and, for that reason, should be included in the assessment of impairment," Lyle Godfrey, the Health Department's technical support chief, wrote in the agency's comments.

The Department of Environmental Quality indicated that a data set of monthly samples could still be used if combined with another data set to create eight samples within a five-month period.

In comments, the National Park Service also expressed a concern that, under the methodology, algal blooms on the Buffalo River over the past two summers should mean that the river is designated as impaired.

## MOST POPULAR

Recommended

Viewed

Commented



Bank awarded \$2.1M from  
 state senator, wife



80-year-old Arkansas  
 woman shot, killed teen  
 intruder, sheriff's office...



Judge to look at files in  
 1987 deaths of 2 boys  
 found on central Arkansas...

Workers to cut off

The Buffalo River Watershed Alliance said the current and proposed methodology doesn't consider algal blooms, specifically. That's because the nutrients -- phosphorus and nitrogen -- that cause algae are not reported at a numeric level.

The alliance recommended that the state develop numeric standards for nutrients statewide. The standards currently exist only for a portion of Beaver Lake.

Several other Arkansas residents expressed concern for the Buffalo River, but many failed to specifically address the assessment methodology and the department considered them to be "out of scope."

People also expressed concern about whether the department's methodology is in accordance with water anti-degradation requirements and its own anti-degradation policy.

Anti-degradation, required under the Clean Water Act, is intended to prevent waters of higher ecological value from degrading any further than they currently are. Arkansas has an anti-degradation policy but is one of only two states with no formal implementation plan for it.

The National Park Service expressed concern that tributaries to waterways like the Buffalo River are not held to high enough standards because the state lacks an anti-degradation plan, that the department should support the protection of the existing conditions of a water body and that the department should err on the side of caution with certain sensitive water bodies until it develops and implements an anti-degradation plan.

The National Park Service also noted that certain phrases in the methodology on how a final determination will be made suggest that the department will inject subjectivity into its analysis.

The EPA raised several questions about how data would be considered and argued against the state department's proposal to combine data sets taken during certain seasons, saying it was "diluting the data set."

The EPA, and others who commented, argued that waters that appeared to be impaired but needed more data to confirm it should be listed as impaired and not among the waters that already have alternative pollution controls in place, as the department proposes.

Some comments expressed a desire for the department to use the conclusions of a scientist who did research in the 1980s for Arkansas to inform the methodology.

A few responses, including from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, noted that the department's assessment methodology draft still includes changes for the maximum amount a water body can exceed the standards to still be considered in attainment of water quality standards.

The department has asked to change the threshold for exceeding minerals levels from 10 percent of the time to 25 percent of the time, while the EPA has not approved the change.

Metro on 11/26/2017

Print Headline: Agency draws 17 remarks on water

Tweet



Like

Share

One person likes this. Sign up to see what your friends like.

ADVERTISEMENT

## More Arkansas

PAPER TRAILS: Award-winning barbecue pitmaster...

Suspect arrested in fatal stabbing outside Little Rock...

Small Business Saturday in Little Rock's downtown...

Mayor IDs prime site for North Little Rock's new...

Agency draws 17 remarks on water

Pilot clinics seek to aid mentally ill without...

Woman faces battery charge over stabbing

County overhauls personnel manual

North Little Rock notebook

[More Arkansas stories >](#)



thousands of locks attached to historic Little Rock...



World War II fighter flier, west Little Rock developer dies at 96



Three killed in medical helicopter crash in Arkansas



Man who raped woman in North Little Rock as teen challenges fairness of...



Arkansas death row inmate who killed young girl dies after being found...

## SHOPPING

### Arkansas Daily Deal



Complete Furnace Inspection and Tune Up for \$64  
Up to \$64 off  
[See more Deals](#)

### Autos



2017 Chevrolet Trax LS  
\$16,995, 423  
Cran Buick GMC of Springdale  
[Search more vehicles](#)

### Real Estate



105 Bayonne Cove Maumelle,  
\$249,000  
2302 square feet  
[View more homes](#)

## FEATURED JOBS

Senior Programmer Analyst

WAL-MART

11.18.17 | Bentonville, AR

Systems Analyst

WAL-MART

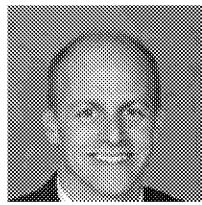
11.18.17 | Bentonville, AR

Senior Programmer Analyst

WAL-MART

11.18.17 | Bentonville, AR

## Recommended Stories



Bank awarded \$2.1M from state senator, wife



80-year-old Arkansas woman shot, killed teen intruder, sheriff's office says



Judge to look at files in 1987 deaths of 2 boys found on central Arkansas railroad tracks

## Calendar

DEC 6	<b>SEETHER</b> Metroplex Live   Little Rock, AR
MON 27	<b>Being an Effective Parent during th...</b> Arkansas Children...   Little Rock, AR
MON 27	<b>Little Rock</b> Ernie Biggs   Little Rock, AR
MON 27	<b>Lift The Rock</b> The Venture Center   Little Rock, AR
MON 27	<b>Free Hearing Screenings</b> Hearing Life   Little Rock, AR
MON 27 TUE 28 WED 29 THU 30 FRI 1 SAT 2	

See all events Add your event

## Comments on: Agency draws 17 remarks on water

To report abuse or misuse of this area please hit the "Suggest Removal" link in the comment to alert our online managers. Read our Terms of Use policy.

You must login to make comments.

Login

Register

Subscribe Now

ADVERTISEMENT

## TOP PICKS

Arkansas Daily Deal  
Get the best stuff in  
Arkansas up to 90% off!  
Sign up today!



# ArkansasOnline

Home News Obituaries Business Entertainment Photos Videos Features Events Classifieds Jobs Real Estate Autos Daily Deal

## NEWS

Today's Newspaper  
Arkansas  
Obituaries  
Opinion / Letters  
National  
Politics  
Elections  
World  
Religion  
Offbeat  
Sister Papers  
Weather  
Print Edition

## BUSINESS

Business  
Business wire  
Tech wire  
Arkansas stocks  
Markets

## SPORTS

Arkansas Sports  
Whole Hog - Razorbacks  
Preps  
Recruiting Guy Blog  
LR Marathon  
College sports galleries  
Preps sports galleries  
AP Sports  
College Football  
NFL  
HBA  
MLB  
PGA  
NASCAR  
Tennis

## FEATURES

Events Calendar  
Event Photos

## FEATURES cont.

Style  
Music  
Family  
Food  
Dining Out  
Find a Restaurant  
Television  
Travel  
High Profile  
Weddings/Engagements

## WEB EXTRAS

E-mail Updates  
Right2Know  
Databases  
Documents  
Archives  
Statement of core values

## WEB EXTRAS cont.

Videos  
Photo Galleries  
Fixit Pothole Map  
War Casualties  
Democrat-Gazette

History  
Blogs

Facebook  
Twitter

## CONTACT

FAQ/Contact Us  
Forgotten Password?  
Subscriber Help  
Newspaper Delivery  
Corporate

## CONTACT cont.

Advertising  
Newspaper Staff  
Website Staff  
Internships  
Terms of Use

## SUBMIT

News Tip  
Event or Meeting  
Letter to the Editor  
Honor/Achievement  
Wedding/Anniversary

## PROMOTIONS

Democrat-Gazette Store  
Bridal Show  
Capture Arkansas  
Spelling Bee

## PUBLICATIONS

Tri Lakes  
Three Rivers  
River Valley & Ozark  
Arkansas Life  
Special Sections

## CLASSIFIEDS

Classifieds  
Jobs  
Real Estate  
Auto

## ADVERTISING

Jobs with Us  
Advertise with us

Copyright © 2017, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Inc.  
All rights reserved.

This document may not be reprinted without the express written permission of Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Inc.

Material from the Associated Press is Copyright © 2017, Associated Press and may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed. Associated Press text, photo, graphic, audio and/or video material shall not be published, broadcast, rewritten for broadcast or publication or redistributed directly or indirectly in any medium. Neither these AP materials nor any portion thereof may be stored in a computer except for personal and noncommercial use. The AP will not be held liable for any delays, inaccuracies, errors or omissions therefrom or in the transmission or delivery of all or any part thereof or for any damages arising from any of the foregoing. All rights reserved.





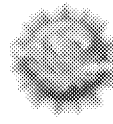
View Today's Arkansas Democrat-Gazette Print Edition

Login

Register

Subscribe Now

## ArkansasOnline

39°  
Little Rock

Search ArkansasOnline

FOLLOW US:

[Home](#) [News](#) [Obituaries](#) [Business](#) [Entertainment](#) [Sports](#) [Photos](#) [Videos](#) [Features](#) [Events](#) [Classifieds](#) [Jobs](#) [Homes](#) [Autos](#)  
[Core Values](#) [Crime](#) [Right2Know](#) [Traffic](#) [Projects](#) [Archives](#) [News Tip](#) [Whole Hog Sports](#) [Arkansas Life](#) [Place an Ad](#) [Arkansas Daily Deal](#)

Monday, November 27, 2017, 8:49 a.m.

ADVERTISEMENT

## TOP PICKS

Mobile Application  
ArkansasOnline is just one  
click away on your smart-  
phone with our mobile app



ADVERTISEMENT

[Home](#) / [News](#) / [Arkansas](#) /

## 'Limited impact' seen near hog farm

By Emily Walkenhorst

This article was published today at 1:00 a.m.

0

[Comments](#)[Font Size](#)

Researchers in the University of Arkansas System say the stream next to C&H Hog Farms in Newton County has phosphorous and nitrogen levels akin to other similar streams in northern Arkansas.

In a research letter published this fall in *Agricultural & Environmental Letters*, researchers working on the Big Creek Research and Extension Team examining C&H's environmental impact wrote their finding suggests "limited impact" of C&H on Big Creek. But longer-term research is needed, they wrote.

The Big Creek Research and Extension Team continues to study Big Creek near C&H using state money. It is formed out of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. The team has been conducting the study since 2013.

In the meantime, any new medium or large hog farms are banned in the Buffalo River's watershed until at least 2020, pending the outcome of the research.

Critics of the Big Creek Research and Extension Team have argued the sampling has not been robust enough to measure C&H's impact and that the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture deals with the agricultural community too often to be unbiased.

The six-page letter, published online Oct. 26, details sampling of phosphorous and nitrogen from the Buffalo River, Upper Illinois and Upper White River watersheds. The sampling shows that concentrations in Big Creek upstream and downstream of C&H are "typical of streams draining similar land uses," the letter states.

"However, this does not preclude the possibility that nutrient concentrations at Big Creek may increase over time, especially if human development and activity in the drainage areas increase," the letter reads later.

Researchers noted that sampling results in three years of study -- from May 2014 through April 2017 -- did not appear to show that nitrogen and phosphorus had increased in three years in Big Creek. But they said data collection over 10 years would be needed to "reliably quantify water-quality trends and characterize sources," based on previous research.

NW News on 11/27/2017

Print Headline: 'Limited impact' seen near hog farm

Tweet



Like

Share

Sign Up to see what your friends like.

ADVERTISEMENT

## More NWAnews

[Northwest Arkansas groups call on region to p...](#)[Fayetteville mixes planning, geographic data ...](#)

## MOST POPULAR

Recommended

Viewed

Commented



Arkansas construction  
employee dies in crane  
accident, company says



1 Arkansas city to consider  
issuing up to \$38M in bonds  
to entice firm to build plant



Body found in parked  
vehicle outside Arkansas  
hospital identified as...

Benton County planning Rogers office site  
 Gentry features monument to Union soldiers  
 'Limited impact' seen near hog farm  
 Veteran hopes to re-establish local DAV chapt...  
 Benton County marriage licenses  
 Washington County marriage licenses  
 Benton County Restaurant Inspections

[More NWAnews stories >](#)



Northwest Arkansas city  
 missing \$1.5 million, audit



1 Arkansas city prepares to  
 celebrate 200th anniversary



Ex-Arkansas deputy won't  
 be charged in sexual assault  
 case, prosecutor says



Arkansas-based Simmons  
 First National Corp. to  
 acquire Texas bank



Gunshot victim found in  
 back seat during Arkansas  
 traffic stop, police say

## Recommended Stories



Arkansas  
 construction  
 employee dies in  
 crane accident,  
 company says



1 Arkansas city to  
 consider issuing  
 up to \$38M in  
 bonds to entice  
 firm to build  
 plant



Body found in  
 parked vehicle  
 outside Arkansas  
 hospital  
 identified as  
 missing woman

### Comments on: 'Limited impact' seen near hog farm

To report abuse or misuse of this area please hit the "Suggest Removal" link in the comment to alert our online managers. Read our Terms of Use policy.

You must login to make comments.

[Login](#)

[Register](#)

[Subscribe Now](#)

## SHOPPING

### Arkansas Daily Deal



Complete Furnace Inspection and  
 Tune Up for \$64  
 Up to \$64 off  
[See more Deals](#)

### Autos



2016 Honda Pilot Elite  
 \$43,595; 6325  
 Russell Honda  
[Search more vehicles](#)

### Real Estate



9518 Centennial Road  
 Jacksonville, \$249,000  
 2395 square feet  
[View more homes](#)

## FEATURED JOBS

Senior Programmer Analyst, Analytics

WAL-MART

11.18.17 | Bentonville, AR

Senior Programmer Analyst, Analytics

WAL-MART

11.18.17 | Bentonville, AR

Dietician Registered

LITTLE ROCK DIAGNOSTIC CLINIC

11.18.17 | Little Rock, AR

South & Main Specialty



Calendar

DEC

8

103.7 The Buzz & Road Runner Pre...

Verizon Arena | North Little Rock, AR

MON

27

Being an Effective Parent during th...

Arkansas Children... | Little Rock, AR

MON

27

Little Rock

Ernie Biggs | Little Rock, AR

MON

27

Lift The Rock

The Venture Center | Little Rock, AR

MON

27

Free Hearing Screenings

Hearing Life | Little Rock, AR

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

27

28

29

30

1

2

See all events

Add your event

ADVERTISEMENT

TOP PICKS

Mobile Application  
ArkansasOnline is just one  
click away on your smart-  
phone with our mobile app

ArkansasOnline

Home	News	Obituaries	Business	Entertainment	Photos	Videos	Features	Events	Classifieds	Jobs	Real Estate	Autos	Daily Deal
NEWS	SPORTS	FEATURES cont.	WEB EXTRAS cont.	CONTACT cont.	PUBLICATIONS								
Today's Newspaper	Arkansas Sports	Style	Videos	Advertising	Tri Lakes								
Arkansas	Whole Hog - Razorbacks	Music	Photo Galleries	Newspaper Staff	Three Rivers								
Obituaries	Preps	Family	Fixdt Pothole Map	Website Staff	River Valley & Ozark								
Opinion / Letters	Recruiting Guy Blog	Food	War Casualties	Internships	Arkansas Life								
National	LR Marathon	Dining Out	Democrat-Gazette	Terms of Use	Special Sections								
Politics	College sports galleries	Find a Restaurant	History	SUBMIT	CLASSIFIEDS								
Elections	Preps sports galleries	Television	Blogs	News Tip	Classifieds								
World	AP Sports	Travel	Facebook	Event or Meeting	Jobs								
Religion	College Football	High Profile	Twitter	Letter to the Editor	Real Estate								
Offbeat	NFL	Weddings/Engagements	CONTACT	Honor/Achievement	Auto								
Sister Papers	NBA	WEB EXTRAS	FAQ/Contact Us	Wedding/Anniversary	Jobs with Us								
Weather	MLB	E-mail Updates	Forgotten Password?	PROMOTIONS	ADVERTISING								
Print Edition	PGA	Right2Know	Subscriber Help	Democrat-Gazette Store	Advertise with us								
BUSINESS	NASCAR	Databases	Newspaper Delivery	Bridal Show									
Business	Tennis	Documents	Corporate	Capture Arkansas									
Business wire	FEATURES	Archives		Spelling Bee									
Tech wire	Events Calendar	Statement of core											
Arkansas stocks	Event Photos	values											
Markets													

Copyright © 2017, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Inc.  
All rights reserved.  
This document may not be reprinted without the express written permission of Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Inc.

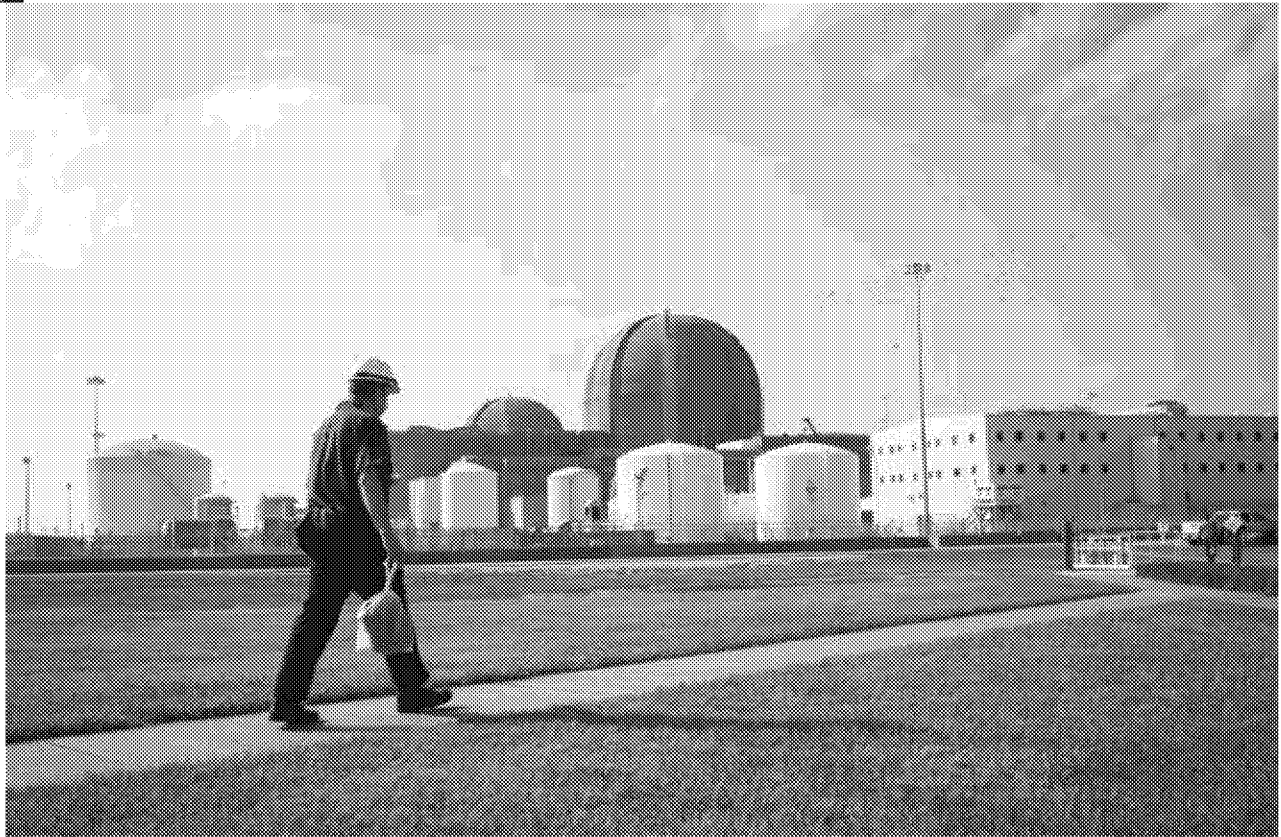
Material from the Associated Press is Copyright © 2017, Associated Press and may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed. Associated Press text, photo, graphic, audio and/or video material shall not be published, broadcast, rewritten for broadcast or publication or redistributed directly or indirectly in any medium. Neither these AP materials nor any portion thereof may be stored in a computer except for personal and noncommercial use. The AP will not be held liable for any delays, inaccuracies, errors or omissions therefrom or in the transmission or delivery of all or any part thereof or for any damages arising from any of the foregoing. All rights reserved.



# Nuclear plant strives to replace retiring workforce



By Jessica Priest  
Nov. 26, 2017 at 9:06 p.m.



A South Texas Project Nuclear Operating Company employee walks to the plant entrance. Angela Piazza for The Victoria Advocate

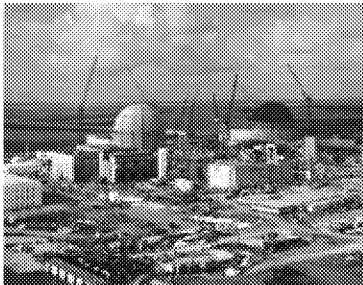
WADSWORTH - Years ago, a Palacios High School student told a packed auditorium about how science, technology, engineering and math piqued her interest.

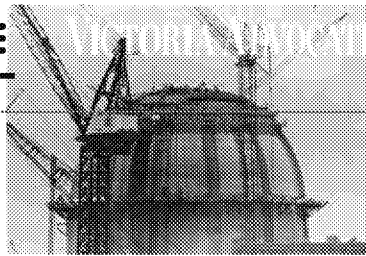
Then-Gov. Rick Perry was in the audience to present the school with a check to encourage other students' interest in the subjects.

Today, Perry is the U.S. Secretary of Energy and that student, Elizabeth Castanon, is a mechanical design engineer at South Texas Project (STP) Nuclear Operating Company, a few miles from her childhood home.

STP's yearslong effort to draw a diverse workforce from Matagorda County is being put to the test now that nearly half its workforce can retire.

"We knew this moment was coming," said Clarence Fenner, STP's supervisor of talent acquisition and planning. "We're on pace to hire 155 this year, and we believe we're going to breach 200 the next."



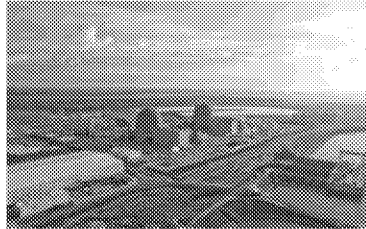


It's not easy to convince someone to move to a rural community, where nuclear plants are traditionally built. Realizing this, STP began partnering with schools in 2007 to grow its own workforce.



It grew Castanon.

She was the president of Powerset, which stands for Powerful Opportunities for Women Eager and Ready for Science, Engineering and Technology.



It was created to address the retirements and is now in 11 schools, Palacios High School Principal Stephanie Garcia said.

In Powerset, women in the nuclear industry mentor female students with a 3.5 grade point average who have scored highly on either their biology or algebra I end-of-course-exams.



"With the ratio of males to females in STEM being lopsided, the next logical step would be to seek what seems to be untapped resources - female students - to fill the gap," Garcia said.

Only 26 percent of STP's workforce is women, but Fenner said more of these women are in jobs traditionally filled by men.

"There's never enough," Castanon said. "Women bring a different perspective. When you have people who all come from the same background, the same school and the same thinking, then you make the same mistakes."



STP is the largest employer in Matagorda County. One reactor began operating in 1988, while the other began operating in 1989.



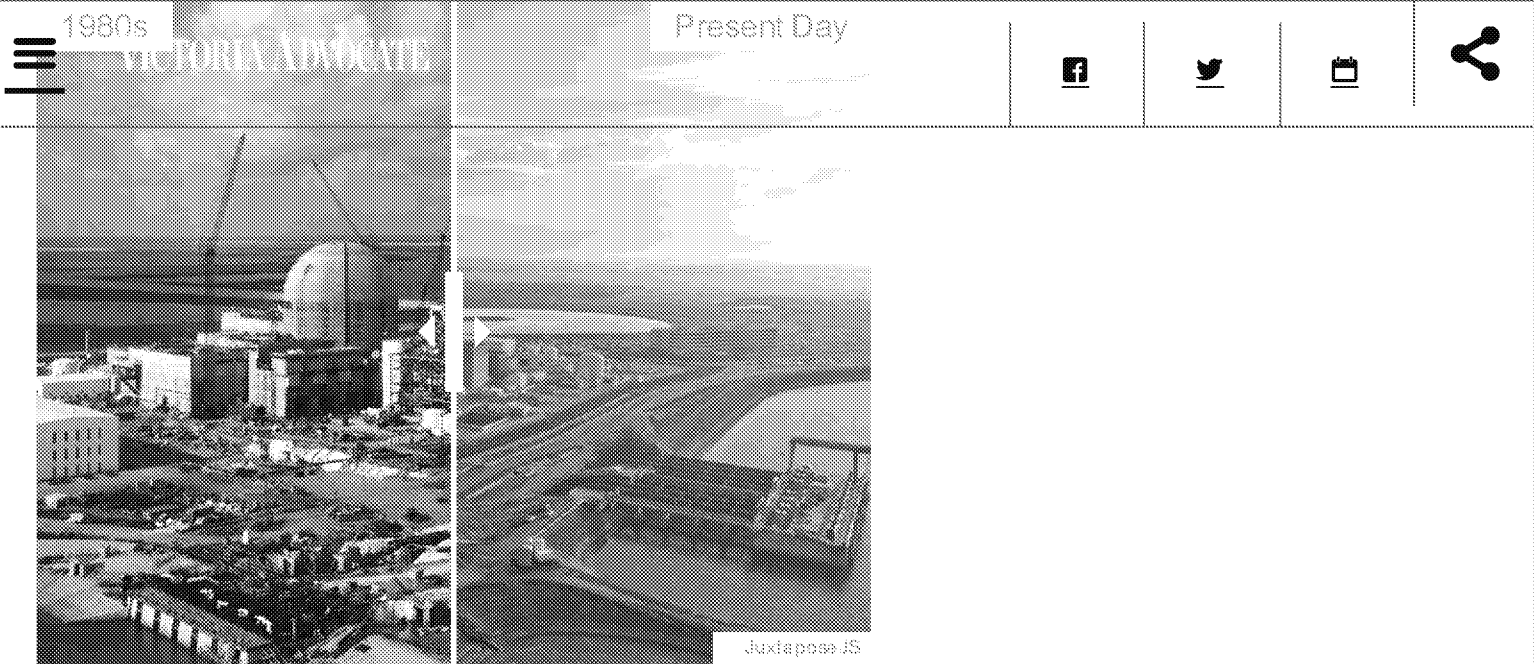


Photo Credits: Before Advocate Archives After STP

It was a big deal to get a job at STP then, and it still is.

Fenner said an entry-level position pays \$45 an hour, or \$93,600 a year before taxes. In contrast, the median household income in Matagorda County in 2015 was \$40,797, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Martin Cortez and his 25-year-old daughter, Courtney, are a picture of this.

When Cortez graduated high school in Bay City in 1977, his parents couldn't afford to send him to college, so he worked for a local electrician, who taught him the trade.

With STP constructing the reactors then, electricians were needed to wire new homes.

When that work dried up, Cortez was an electrical contractor for plants in the area while starting his family. That work was, at times, unreliable, though.

He still remembers walking into a motel's conference room in 1984 and applying with 200 other men to be an electrician at STP.

"I've always thought I was so blessed. There were only six that they were going to hire then," he said.

Today, Cortez is the electrical maintenance manager at STP.

He could have retired three years ago, but he hasn't.

He sent all three of his children to college.

Both Castanon and the younger Cortez are alumni of the Texas A&M University system, which hosts the Nuclear Power Institute.

Like Powerset, STP helped create the Nuclear Power Institute in 2007 to address the retirements.

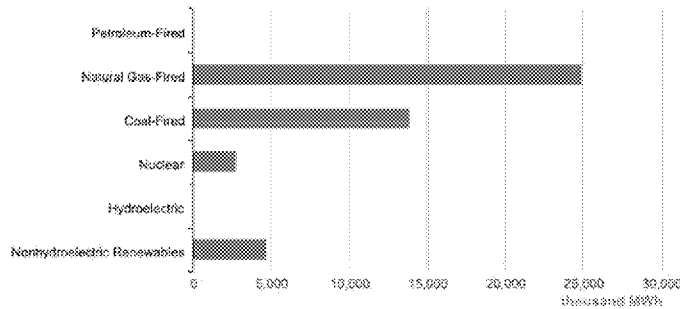
Most recently, STP gave its next generation of workers the job stability its first generation enjoyed by securing a license extension through 2043.




Nevertheless, nuclear plants generate less than a quarter of the country's electricity, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

[Texas Net Electricity Generation By Source, July 2017](#) by [Victoria Advocate](#) on Scribd

Texas Net Electricity Generation by Source, Jul. 2017



 Source: Energy Information Administration, Electric Power Monthly

[Show me more about this topic](#)

1 of 1

The only other nuclear plant in Texas is in Glen Rose, which is about 70 miles north of Waco.

Tom "Smitty" Smith, the former director of Public Citizen's Texas office, said while women should take their rightful place in what has generally been a heavily male-dominated industry, he doubted STP would continue to be economical.

Last year, the federal government gave STP permission to construct two additional reactors, but that project's been mothballed because of low natural gas prices.

This raises the question - should young people be encouraged to enter this industry?

John Keeley, a spokesman for Nuclear Energy Institute, thinks so.

Nuclear plants generate energy more reliably than the wind or the sun and do so without polluting the air.

"The hurricanes that we saw ... were a powerful reminder that Mother Nature has a say in this and what you're seeing from the Trump Administration now is a fresh consideration of resiliency and reliability," Keeley said.

For both Castanon and Cortez, STP has been such a big part of their lives that they haven't considered how other sources of electricity may be undercutting it.

If Castanon hadn't been accepted for an internship at STP when she applied for a second time at her father's urging, she would have completed her doctorate degree in nuclear engineering.

"And if I had finished doing that, I would be doing research, probably in another state, but I had always wanted to move back here," she said.

She recently updated a calculation that shows how many new items can be placed in containment before there's a pressurization problem. Even though she's worked at STP for more than a year, a mentor oversees and signs off on her work.

"My mentor has been Wes, and he's retiring in January, so I have him for that long, but some people have had mentors for five or 10 years," Castanon said



Just before Hurricane Harvey, when about 250 employees kept STP operating, Cortez switched departments.

Not only is the department closer to her dad ("A lot of people recognize my last name and immediately expect a lot out of me, which I appreciate"), it's closer to the reactor where she can see her work in action.

"I think it is - I won't use the word scary - but it will be challenging, and I feel like there's a lot of pressure on the new people to learn everything they possibly can before that entire generation retires. So, that's basically what I'm working on right now, just bothering my mentors constantly," she said.

Other clips:

[Nuclear Clip 1](#) by [Victoria Advocate](#) on Scribd



[Show me more about this topic](#)

[Nuclear Clip 2](#) by [Victoria Advocate](#) on Scribd



# Plant to change management

KYN KLASS OCT 7 1987  
The Victoria Advocate

**WADSWORTH** — There's not enough to go around at the South Texas Project nuclear plant, because a management changeover aimed at ending disputes between the plant's owners.

STP Nuclear Operating Company (STPNOC) should assume management of the nuclear plant by Nov. 1, replacing a nearly two-year transition. Until now, Electric Light & Power has served as the second manager of the facility and its four reactors.



STP spokesman John Taylor said the plant has worked hard to make the transition as transparent as it could for employees and the public.

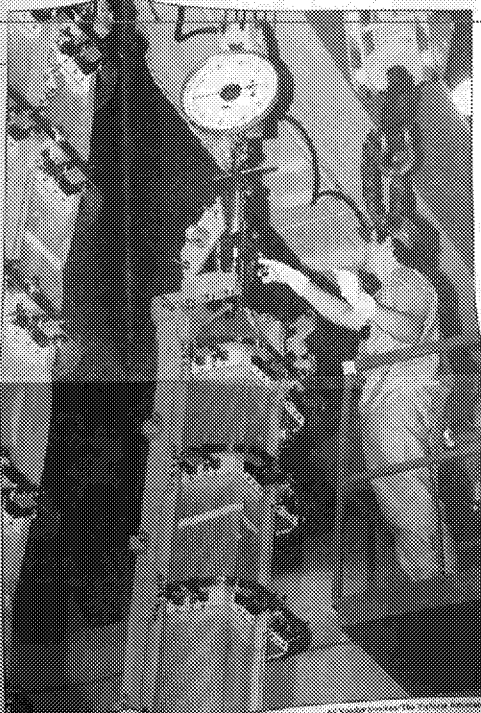
In fact, plant officials say, the current law case will not be raised. And residents won't see an increase in their electricity bills, said Andy Stone, spokesman for Central Power & Light Co.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission issued an order in April authorizing the transfer of operating control from EL&P to the operating company for both STP units.

STP, a 1,000-employee plant located about 26 miles southwest of Bay City, is one of the world's largest producers of nuclear energy. It has used commercial operation for its Unit 1 in 1984 and Unit 2 in 1985.

Ledra Lowe, spokeswoman for EL&P, said the changeover in management took place as a result of a settlement with the city.

See PLANT, Page 12A



A South Texas Project nuclear plant worker prepares for the plant's recent refueling. The facility will soon undergo a management changeover aimed at ending disputes between STP plant's owners.

Show me more about this topic

1 of 1

[View on Scribd](#)

[Back to document](#)

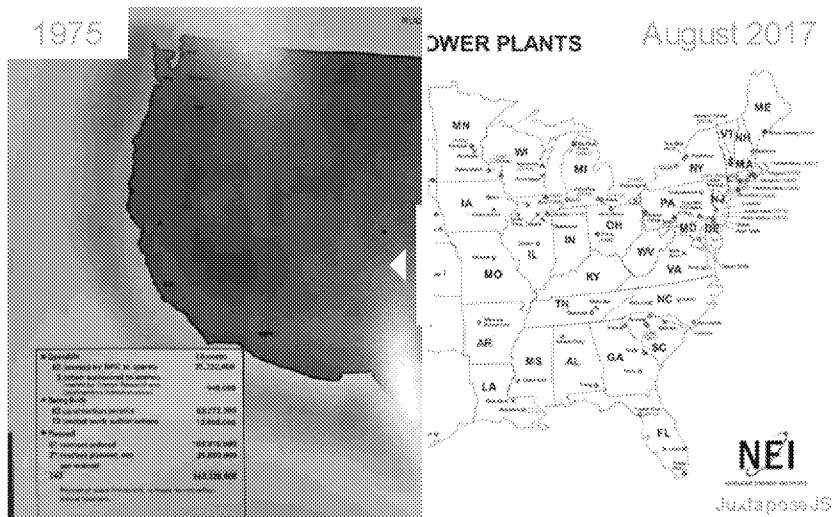


Photo Credits: Before Advocate Archives After Nuclear Energy Institute



## Comments

0 Comments

Sort by Oldest



Add a comment...

Facebook Comments Plugin





© Victoria Advocate Publishing Co., All Rights Reserved.



311 E. Constitution St. Victoria, Texas 77901 - Phone: 361-575-1451

Newsroom: 361-574-1222 - Customer Care: 361-574-1200

Powered By ADVOCATE DIGITAL MEDIA

63°  
ClearWelcome to the site!  
Login or Signup below.

Login | Signup

News	Sports	Obituaries	Life	Community	NIE	Opinion	Customer Service	Classifieds	Careers
------	--------	------------	------	-----------	-----	---------	------------------	-------------	---------

DON'T MISS! MYBROWNSVILLEHERALD.COM COMMUNITY CALENDAR BREAST CANCER AWARENESS



Home News Valley

# EPA accepts new Arroyo watershed management plan

 Search  
☐ Site ☐ Web

Story Comments

Print Font Size:

Recommend 1

Tweet



Share



The rain-swollen Arroyo Colorado is seen in Harlingen Monday, Oct. 26, 2015. By Marcela Rodriguez, Valley Morning Star

Posted: Sunday, November 26, 2017 10:00 pm

By RICK KELLEY | Staff Writer

**HARLINGEN** — A new and improved plan to protect the Arroyo Colorado watershed has won the approval of the Environmental Protection Agency.

The green-lighting by the EPA means the new study replaces one adopted in 2007 and will provide a framework for cleaning up the heavily polluted waterway, which also serves as a key flood-control feature for the Rio Grande Valley.

The update met the agency's national guidelines for watershed-based plans, and outlines a strategy to improve the Arroyo's two segments impaired by bacteria and low dissolved oxygen rates, Jaime Flores, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service program coordinator in Weslaco, said in a statement.

"The Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership has been working with local stakeholders and project partners for the last five years to conduct baseline monitoring, model best management practices and management measures, and complete the updated plan," Flores said.

The Arroyo Colorado runs for 90 miles from Mission to the Laguna Madre near Arroyo City. The river is split into the upper, freshwater section, and the final 26 miles known as the tidal section due to saltwater intrusion from the Laguna Madre.

The tidal section of the Arroyo was initially listed as being among impaired water bodies in Texas due to low dissolved oxygen levels in 1978. In addition, both the upper and lower Arroyo contain high levels of bacteria that exceed the state's human contact recreation standard.

"While great progress has been made in both urban and agricultural areas to reduce pollutant loads, we have not reached our goal of removing the Arroyo Colorado from the list of impaired water bodies," Flores said. "This updated plan will guide us in that effort."

## Scoping out the problems

The new 157-page document reveals complexities in the Arroyo Colorado that belie its mere 90-mile length. The plan factors in soil types in the Valley, source points of pollution both natural and man-made, agricultural runoff problems and the impact of both colonias and urbanization in one of the nation's fastest-growing regions.

Pollution problems in the Arroyo watershed include low dissolved oxygen levels, agricultural and lawn runoff and fecal material from both animals and humans, the latter primarily arriving via septic systems, the document says.

## This Week's Circulars



Hover for Circular

Hover for Circular



Hover for Circular

Hover for Circular

Nitrogen and phosphorus pollution of the Arroyo is primarily the result of agricultural and lawn runoff, with higher concentrations of phosphorus in the Mid and Upper Valley, and nitrogen spread throughout the watershed.

E. coli bacteria loads are lower in the Mid and Upper Valley and increase in density the closer one gets to the Laguna Madre.

Just less than 50 percent of E. coli pollution monitored at sampling stations along the Arroyo is attributable to non-avian wildlife like white-tailed deer, nilgai and javelina, the study says.

The study discounts any pollution impact from feral hogs, which in Texas number somewhere between two and three million.

"Fortunately, feral hogs have not yet become a major issue in the Arroyo as they have in many other watersheds in Texas," the report states.

The report also downplays the impact of javelina along the length of the Arroyo, saying an estimated 100,000 javelina occupy 62 million acres of Texas rangelands and, extrapolating from these figures, the Arroyo holds "an estimated 127 javelina in the watershed."

Avian contributions to pollutants in the Arroyo are a very significant pollution factor. Some 250 bird species frequent riparian areas along the river, with 70 percent of those being migratory species.

As far as E. coli is concerned, these birds contribute an estimated 18.2 percent of the total bacterial pollution found in samples of Arroyo waters.

Septic systems at 11.2 percent and cattle at 11.1 percent are the other big polluters when it comes to E. coli bacteria in the Arroyo watershed, the study says.

But the study's authors say human fecal pollution is the primary risk factor for people.

"Despite significant E. coli contributions from wildlife, human fecal pollution still poses the greatest human health risk," the study says, adding that human fecal material may well be under-reported in the sampling.

Into the future

Jude Benavides, chair of the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership and Steering Committee, said the plan outlines the next phase of efforts to improve water quality in the Arroyo.

"This update to the plan represents the quintessential marathon effort," said Benavides, an associate professor at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Brownsville. "It is not the work of any one single individual. It is instead a direct outcome of the long-term commitment, continuous support and goal-oriented work of numerous individuals and organizations.

"We all look forward to helping put this plan into action in order to preserve and best manage the Arroyo Colorado for our current and future stakeholders," he added.

John Tracy, Texas Water Resources Institute director in College Station, said those involved in the plan's development were pleased with the EPA's acceptance.

"Much work has gone into compiling the plan, and I believe it sets forth an effective approach to restoring the water quality in the Arroyo Colorado," Tracy said.

Goals outlined

Among the ways to achieve a healthy watershed, the plan proposes to:

- >> Encourage voluntary BMP (best management practice) adoption on an additional 35,000 acres of cropland (i.e. 75 percent of cropland under a conservation plan), 10,000 acres of pastureland and 7,500 acres of rangeland.
- >> Improve the quality of treated effluent from WWTFs (wastewater treatment facilities), reduce sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) and where possible, encourage voluntary implementation of enhanced biological treatment projects to remove nutrients from WWTF effluent.
- >> Increase wastewater and stormwater infrastructure development for rural and unincorporated low-income communities (i.e., colonias).
- >> Repair/replace 300 failing OSSFs (onsite sewage facilities) and provide colonia residents and homeowners with OSSFs information on how to properly inspect, maintain and service their septic systems.
- >> Pursue installation of three aeration structures (i.e. waterfalls) in the non-tidal segment.

Calendar

November 2017

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		
today's events		browse		submit		

Popular   Commented   Facebook Activity

Stories

History connects on federal courthouse steps in Brownsville

Feds make arrests in trafficking conspiracy

Fire chief: Bed-ridden woman dies in blaze

Authorities reminds public of no-refusal policy

CBP seizes nearly 15 pounds of cocaine

More

Photos

Videos

Homes   Cars

Homes

San Benito. Tropical Trail 50+ Mbl. Home & RV Park.

Updated: 5 01 am

- >> Pursue installation and operation of three to five aerators in the zone of DO (dissolved oxygen) impairment.
- >> Encourage adoption of landscaping, GI (green infrastructure), LID (low impact development) and urban forestry ordinances on new development and retrofitting of existing development.
- >> Reduce lawn fertilizer use by homeowners by 10 percent through educational and outreach (E&O).
- >> Reduce pet waste loading by 10 percent.
- >> Introduce and encourage alternative urban development designs and adding LID and drainage policies to LID code that help protect and restore water quality.

The watershed plan is currently available for download at <http://arroyocolorado.org/>

Development of the updated plan was funded through a Clean Water Act grant to the Texas Water Resources Institute, administered by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality from the EPA.

The institute is part of Texas A&M AgriLife Research, AgriLife Extension and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at TexasA&MUniversity.

## CASA GRANDE APARTMENTS ASK FOR OUR MOVE IN SPECIAL!

\$650

Updated: Yesterday

Move In Specials Looking for the right place, for the

Updated: 5:01 am

[More Homes](#)

Recommend

Tweet



Share

Discuss

Print

Posted in Valley on Sunday, November 26, 2017 10:00 pm.

0 Comments

Sort by Oldest



Add a comment...

Facebook Comments Plugin

## Calendar

today's events [browse](#) [submit](#)

## Today's Edition



**LOCAL GUIDE**  
**(HTTP://LOCAL.BROWNSVIL**


**FEATURED BUSINESSES    RECENT ADS**

**SEE MORE (HTTP://LOCAL.BROWNSVILLI**


Online Features

Online Features


Real Estate




6 tips to make  
your bathroom  
sellable...  
Brandpoint (BPT)



Barn doors e  
indoors: An  
ideal w inte  
Brandpoint (B



Top 5 features  
millennials  
look for l...  
Brandpoint (BPT)



6 ways to refresh your  
home with hard...  
Brandpoint (BPT)

1

2

3

[Site](#) [Web](#)

Advertising  
Place an Ad  
Co-op Advertising  
Commercial Print  
National Advertising

Archives  
Story Archives  
Obituaries Archives

Subscriber Services  
Subscribe  
Services

Online Services  
RSS Feeds

WebSites  
[EINuevoHeraldo.com](#)  
[RGVSports.com](#)

Copyright © 2016

The contents of this website may not be reproduced without written permission from The Brownsville Herald. All rights reserved.  
1135 E. Van Buren St, Brownsville, TX 78520 | (956) 542-4301  
[Careers](#) | [Autos](#) | [Homes](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Classifieds](#)

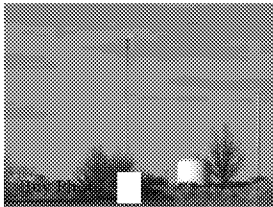


AIM Media TX LLC

# Opponents of methane delay gather as lawmakers, industry reps disagree on Four Corners methane emissions

Megan Petersen, Daily Times Published 4:56 p.m. MT Nov. 26, 2017

Environmental Defense Fund releases report on cost effects of methane problem, which NM Oil and Gas Associated says has significantly declined since 2011



(Photo: Jon Austria/The Daily Times)

FARMINGTON — Discussions over a contentious rule regarding methane emissions flared up again over the past weeks as the Bureau of Land Management ended a public comment period on an 18-month delay of a rule meant to curb emissions from venting, flaring and leaks.

As the public comment period wrapped, industry representatives and lawmakers released different – and at times opposing – views and evidence about the status of methane emissions in the Four Corners region.

The New Mexico Oil and Gas Association reports that the Four Corners region has seen a 47 percent decline in methane emissions since 2011, citing data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program \(https://www.epa.gov/ghgreporting\)](https://www.epa.gov/ghgreporting). The data shows methane emissions, which

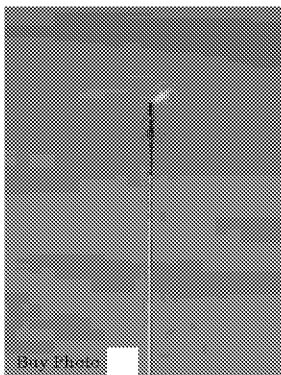
clocked in at 8.6 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2011, have declined to 4.6 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2016, according to a Nov. 2 press release from NMOGA.

“(The oil and gas) industry is proactively taking steps to reduce (methane emissions), and we’re proactively reducing venting and flaring, according to data provided by the state,” NMOGA Director of Communications Robert McEntyre said on Nov. 9.

However, Jon Goldstein of the [Environmental Defense Fund \(https://www.edf.org/\)](https://www.edf.org/), a bipartisan environmental nonprofit organization, said that the EPA data can only take into account large producers — sources that produce more than 25,000 tons per year — and the data collection model is not able to measure the effect of methane leakage.

Goldstein also said the data is skewed by a mega-producer that has made significant changes to its practices over the past few years.

“The lion’s share of the emissions reduction that’s being shown in that (EPA) inventory data comes from the improved practices of one producer — Conoco Philips went to some better and more modern practices in the San Juan Basin in terms of liquid unloading and pneumatic controllers,” Goldstein said in a news conference call on Nov. 9.



A flaring stack is pictured near Riverview Golf Course on Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2017 in Kirtland. (Photo: Jon Austria/The Daily Times)

Goldstein, along with Sen. Tom Udall, were quick to point out that some oil and gas producers in the Four Corners region and across the state are taking proactive steps towards reducing methane waste, but Udall said a hard line must be drawn to hold producers to a consistent standard.

“I think there is no doubt that there are very good, creative, strong companies that want to do the right thing,” Udall said during the Nov. 9 call. “They get out there and try to prevent leaks and do the kinds of things that we would expect flowing from seeing a report like (a report released by the EDF on Nov. 9), but the problem is if you don’t have a good, solid, commonsense regulation, others are going to do just the opposite or do nothing. Really what you’re doing with this rule is setting up a floor and then encouraging people in the industry to do a lot better.”

The EDF released a report detailing the cost effects of the methane waste problem, as well as emission sources and natural gas production rates by federal, private, state and tribal land. The report states the value of wasted natural gas adds up to \$182 million dollars using current prices, but increases to \$244 million using a

reference price standard. Goldstein said taxes on the wasted gas could add up to \$27 million — a price tag that could make a difference to the state's financial slump, mainly benefitting public schools.

Critics from the industry have cited the high cost of implementing regulation to producers in their opposition to the rule and support of a delay, but Udall said that cost concern is “just a talking point ... (that) doesn't hold up.”

“I don't think there's any doubt that if you put in place these prevention techniques, an additional industry grows — a mitigation industry — and you have jobs increase there, too,” Udall said. “This can all be done, and it can be done in a simple way, and that was the conclusion of federal agencies that studied this for quite a period of time and came up with a really common-sense regulation (in the BLM methane waste prevention rule).”

However, McEntyre said supporters of the rule are out of touch with the industry.

“Jon Goldstein and Sen. Udall don't necessarily operate in the oil and gas industry, and from our vantage point, it doesn't appear like they're talking to very many operators about the problem they're facing,” McEntyre said after the conference call on Nov. 9. “... (New Mexico citizens) should understand what the objective of some of these groups are. They have the objective to totally put industry out of business; we have the objective of creating energy while protecting the environment, and I think those numbers from the EPA — as uncomfortable as it may be for Jon Goldstein — underscore that and highlight that commitment.”

Grassroots movements have been active in the conversation, too.

Buy Photo



Aztec City Commissioner Katee McClure, center, acting as a private citizen, talks with Bureau of Land Management, Farmington field manager Richard Fields, Monday, Nov. 6, 2017 at the Bureau of Land Management Farmington Field Office. (Photo: Jon Austria/The Daily Times)

The public comment period for the delay closed on Nov. 6, a day that saw half a dozen people at the BLM Farmington field office ([/story/news/2017/11/07/local-citizens-voice-support-methane-rule-citing-environmental-financial-benefits/836670001/](https://www.aztecdailytimes.com/story/news/2017/11/07/local-citizens-voice-support-methane-rule-citing-environmental-financial-benefits/836670001/)) to oppose the delay and support full implementation of the Obama Administration-era rule. More than 100 people gathered in Durango on Nov. 6 in opposition of the delay in a rally organized by Conservation Colorado (<https://conservationco.org/>), the San Juan Citizens Alliance (<http://www.sanjuancitizens.org/>) and Indivisible Durango (<http://www.indivisibledurango.co/>), according to a press release.

Several groups, including collectives of national and regional leaders, have stood against the delay, sending four different letters signed by more than 250 elected officials, religious leaders, environmental organization leaders and stakeholders from across the western U.S., according to information provided by the Smoot Tewes Group, a political and public relations consultant company associated with the grassroots movement.

A bicameral group of 81 lawmakers (<https://www.tomudall.senate.gov/news/press-releases/senate-and-house-democrats-oppose-delay-of-blm-waste-prevention-rule-urge-zinke-to-save-taxpayer-money-and-protect-public-health>), led in part by Udall, have urged Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke “not to suspend or unlawfully delay implementation” of the methane rule.

Feedback from the public comment period was sent on to state and federal BLM officials, who will decide whether to continue implementing the rule or to go forward with the delay.



Megan Petersen covers business and education for The Daily Times. Reach her at 505-564-4621 or [mpetersen@daily-times.com](mailto:mpetersen@daily-times.com).

Read or Share this story: <http://www.daily-times.com/story/money/industries/oil-gas/2017/11/26/opponents-methane-delay-gather-lawmakers-industry-reps-disagree-four-corners-methane-emissions/867616001/>



Monday, November 27, 2017

OPINION

# How one Trump nominee combined environmental quality and economic development

by Charles D. McConnell | Nov 27, 2017, 12:01 AM

*Under Kathleen Hartnett White's six-year tenure at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the state realized impressive declines in the levels of pollution during that time. For example, from 2000 to 2006, Houston (pictured above) grew by approximately 1 million people, a 25 percent increase, and yet saw eight-hour ozone design values plunge 26 percent. (Alex Garrido / Wikimedia Commons)*

Throughout Kathleen Hartnett White's six-year tenure at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and in subsequent years thereafter, she has demonstrated thoughtful and effective regulatory insights and practice.

Kathleen has been nominated by President Trump to chair the White House Council on Environmental Quality, and she is being questioned and challenged – not for her record, and not for her qualifications, but because she has refused to define environmental quality and economic development as mutually exclusive.

The Dallas Morning News recently stated in an editorial: "White consistently sided with business interests at the expense of public health as chair of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality."

The Morning News should know better, because in Texas, it's clear that "business interests" – which are directly related to jobs and productivity – are not synonymous with, nor have they been responsible for, a negative impact on public health.

Kathleen led TCEQ during an extraordinary period of growth in the Texas population. And yet, the state realized impressive declines in the levels of pollution during that time. For example, from 2000 to 2006, Houston grew by approximately 1 million people, a 25 percent increase, and yet saw eight-hour ozone design values plunge 26 percent.

In 2004, during her tenure, Texas ranked sixth in the nation for lowest NOx emissions, and the leader in efficiency and lowest criteria pollutant emitter of all states that used coal.

Texas' annual point source NOx emissions dropped about 45 percent the year before she took leadership to the year she left that post, which translates to a reduction from 800,000 tons per year to 420,000 tons per year.

Texas is in the top four states in the nation for low NOx emissions per capita from fossil-fuel fired power plants, and has the sixth-lowest SO2 per capita emissions, even though Texas leads the U.S. in energy produced from crude oil, natural gas, and electricity.

Clearly, environmental protection and economic growth can go hand-in-hand through effective leadership. Results are achieved through smart and thoughtful regulation that strives for real energy sustainability. Accessible, reliable, affordable, and environmentally-responsible energy for citizens and industry: That's the leadership that TCEQ exercised under Kathleen's purview.

Listening to her critics, one might think she opposes all regulation. That's simply untrue, as her record shows. The fact is, she has always supported and insisted on smart regulation.

That was the goal of TCEQ under her watch. And with a staff of 3,000 personnel, an annual budget of more than \$600 million, 16 regional offices regulating 315,000 entities, the TCEQ is the second-largest environmental regulatory agency in the world, after the Environmental Protection Agency.

She has also served on the Texas Water Development Board, the Texas Economic Development Commission, and the Environmental Flows Study Commission. She recently completed her term as an officer and director of the Lower Colorado River Authority.

White now sits on the editorial board of the Journal of Regulatory Science.

Qualifications, leadership, and insight are why we need her in the White House, leading the president's Council on Environmental Quality. The Senate should act quickly to confirm her to that post.

*Charles D. McConnell served as Assistant Secretary of Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy from 2011 – 2013.*

*If you would like to write an op-ed for the Washington Examiner, please read our guidelines on submissions here.*





63°  
ClearWelcome to the site!  
Login or Signup below.

Login | Signup

News	Sports	Obituaries	Life	Community	NIE	Opinion	Customer Service	Classifieds	Careers
------	--------	------------	------	-----------	-----	---------	------------------	-------------	---------

DON'T MISS! MYBROWNSVILLEHERALD.COM COMMUNITY CALENDAR BREAST CANCER AWARENESS



Home News Valley

# Pharr to boast new water storage tank

 Search  
☐ Site ☐ Web

Story Comments

Print Font Size:

Recommend 0

Tweet



Share



MGN ONLINE

Buy this photo

Posted: Sunday, November 26, 2017 10:57 pm

By BERENICE GARCIA | Staff Writer

**PHARR** — The City of Pharr is making accommodations to grow with the addition of a water storage tank.

The Eldora Elevated Storage Water Tank, currently under construction, will allow the city to add more water meter connections and have more water available as needed.

The elevated tank will have a capacity of one million gallons and is part of the city's efforts to increase the water capacity to accommodate 10,000 additional connections and to comply with standards set by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

"TCEQ requires us to have 100 gallons of overhead storage per connection," said Jose Villegas, the city's utility director. "We have about 20,000 connections, which means we should have 200,000 gallons of elevated storage."

The city currently has 2.25 million gallons of elevated storage, according to a news release issued Thursday.

The project was funded by \$2.7 million of a grant and loan from the Texas Water Development Board's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, Villegas said, adding that it is about 50 percent complete and likely to take another four months to finish.

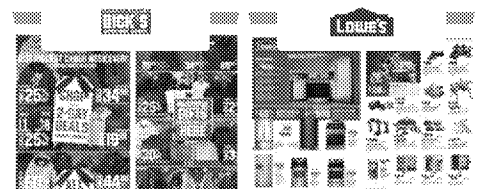
"This is reserve capacity that is up in the air," he said. "What that does, it augments our capacity in the system so we have one more million gallons of water that is already treated and ready to be used. Whether it be for domestic use or fire protection, it's already available."

## This Week's Circulars



Hover for Circular

Hover for Circular



Hover for Circular

Hover for Circular

Recommend 0

Tweet



Share

Discuss

Print

Posted in Valley on Sunday, November 26, 2017 10:57 pm.

0 Comments

Sort by Oldest



Add a comment...

Facebook Comments Plugin

## Calendar

November 2017						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		
today's events			browse		submit	

Popular Commented Facebook Activity

### Stories

History connects on federal courthouse steps in Brownsville

Feds make arrests in trafficking conspiracy

Fire chief: Bed-ridden woman dies in blaze

Authorities reminds public of no-refusal policy

CBP seizes nearly 15 pounds of cocaine

More

Photos

Videos

Homes Cars

## Homes

**HARLINGEN 1 Bedroom 1 Bath CA/CH**  
204 W. Carrol \$450  
\$450

Updated: 5:01 am

San Benito. Tropical Trail 50+ Mbl. Home & RV Park.

Updated: 5:01 am

Donna 2 Bdrm. 1 Bath Apt. Stove, Refrig., \$465/Mo. Central

\$465

Updated: Yesterday

[More Homes](#)

## Calendar

[today's events](#) [browse](#) [submit](#)

## Today's Edition



RECENT OBITUARIES [View All \(31\) >](#)





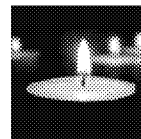
**PERFECTO CHAPA**  
Sign Guest Book



**ROSALEE COHEN**  
Sign Guest Book



**EDWARD CORRIGAN**  
Sign Guest Book



**MARIA PLOUFFE**

[VIEW ALL OBITUARIES](#)



## **LOCAL GUIDE** **([HTTP://LOCAL.BROWNSVILLEHERALD.COM](http://local.brownsvilleherald.com))**

**FEATURED BUSINESSES**   **RECENT ADS**

**[SEE MORE \(HTTP://LOCAL.BROWNSVILLEHERALD.COM\)](http://local.brownsvilleherald.com)**

## Online Features

### Online Features

<p><b>Pet Central</b></p>  <p>Having a pet is a lot of responsibility, and we'll help by giving you lots of tips and tricks! <a href="#">More &gt;&gt;</a></p>	<p><b>Fitness</b></p>  <p>Our fitness articles will help teach you how to workout with gym- and home-based exercises. <a href="#">More &gt;&gt;</a></p>	
1	2	3

Site Web

Search

Advertising  
Place an Ad  
Co-op Advertising  
Commercial Print  
National Advertising

Archives  
Story Archives  
Obituaries Archives

Subscriber Services  
Subscribe  
Services

Online Services  
RSS Feeds

WebSites  
[EINuevoHeraldo.com](http://EINuevoHeraldo.com)  
[RGVSports.com](http://RGVSports.com)

Copyright © 2016

The contents of this website may not be reproduced without written permission from The Brownsville Herald. All rights reserved.  
1135 E. Van Buren St, Brownsville, TX 78520 | (956) 542-4301  
Careers | Autos | Homes | Jobs | Classifieds



AIM Media TX LLC

# DAILY POST

Official Newspaper of Record in Los Alamos County

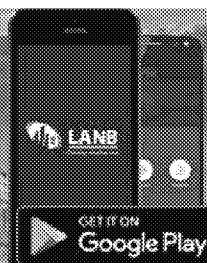
Member  
National Newspaper  
Association

Member  
New Mexico Press  
Association

Front NEWS Sections Opinion FAQ Weather Real Estate Classifieds Legals About Us/Contact

## IT'S HERE!

Our new LANB Mobile Banking App is now available to download.



GET IT ON  
Google Play

Download on the  
App Store

Available on  
amazon appstore



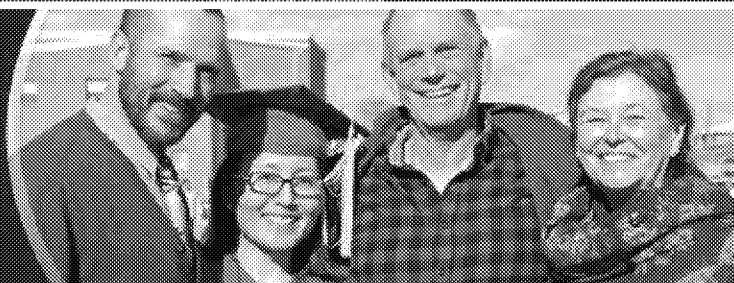
**LANB**  
Creating a better way.

MEMBER FDIC Equal Housing Lender

## Education is the best gift.

### NORTHERN NEW MEXICO COLLEGE

CALL OR VISIT US TODAY: 505.747.2111 / NNMC.EDU

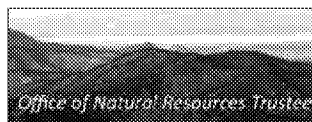


## Meeting Seeks Public Comment On Draft Restoration Plan For Environmental Damage At Chevron/Questa Site

Submitted by Carol A. Clark on November 27, 2017 - 5:37am

ONRT News:

ALBUQUERQUE — State and federal trustees will host a public meeting 5:30-7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 29, at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7688, 2597 State Highway 522 in Questa, to discuss the recently finalized Draft Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment ("Draft RP/EA") for the Chevron Mining Inc. Questa Mine ("Site").



Office of Natural Resources Trustee

The Draft RP/EA was finalized recently by the New Mexico Office of Natural Resources Trustee (ONRT), the United States Department of Agriculture (represented by the Forest Service), and the United States Department of the Interior (represented by the Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management), (collectively, the "Trustees").

The Site is located in Northern New Mexico approximately five miles east of the town of Questa, adjacent to the Red River. The Site also includes mine tailing ponds located approximately nine miles west of the mine. The Site is the location of a large groundwater contamination plume that will require treatment in perpetuity to mitigate human health risks. That treatment will be conducted under the oversight of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to accomplish remediation.

Separately, restoration will be accomplished through the Draft RP/EA which describes how the Trustees for the Questa Mine Site Natural Resource Damage Assessment will use natural resource damages settlement funds for the restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition of equivalent natural resources and services that were injured by the release of hazardous substances from the Site. The Trustees' overall restoration objective is to compensate the public for these injuries through the implementation of restoration projects that provide comparable services in or near the Site. In order to meet this objective, the Trustees must identify, screen, and evaluate restoration alternatives (i.e., restoration projects).

The Trustees held a public informational meeting in Taos on April 27, 2016, followed by an open house on April 28, 2016, seeking proposals. They then carefully evaluated the proposals that were submitted by the deadline of August 1, 2016. The Trustees have completed the evaluation of groundwater and aquatic resources restoration projects submitted and have documented descriptions of the projects and the results of the evaluation in the Draft RP/EA. The Trustees are now seeking public comment on the Draft

Search the Daily Post

In and Around Town Calendar

Subscribe FREE to News Alerts

Make the Daily Post your Homepage

More News - Like us on Facebook

THE Valley  
DAILY POST

LOS ALAMOS  
LOS ALAMOS COUNTY JOBS

ZIA REALTY GROUP  
Click here to see all of  
Zia's Property Listings

Restaurant Open  
7 Days a Week  
COUNTRY ON THE GREEN

LOS ALAMOS BUSINESS  
CHANGES BUSINESS NEWS & EVENTS

RP/EA. Funding for the restoration projects derives from a \$4,000,000 settlement for natural resource damages reached between the Trustees and the Responsible Party, Chevron Mining, Inc.

More information regarding the Site and a copy of the Draft RP/EA is available on the internet at <https://onrt.env.nm.gov/chevron-molycorp-mine/> or may be requested from the NM Office of Natural Resources Trustee, 121 Tijeras Ave. NE, Ste. 1000, Albuquerque, NM 87102, (505) 222-9546. Copies may also be viewed at the following public libraries: Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Road, Questa, New Mexico 87556 and Taos Public Library, 402 Camino De La Placitas, Taos, New Mexico 87571.

The public is also invited to send written comments on the contents of the Draft RP/EA. The public comment period is open for 30 days, starting Nov. 17, 2017 and ending Dec. 18, 2017. Comments must be submitted in writing to the New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, 2105 Osuna Rd NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87113 by December 18, 2017 at 4 p.m. Mountain Standard Time. Written comments may also be sent by fax to: (505) 346-2542. Comments may also be submitted via e-mail to: [nmesfo@fws.gov](mailto:nmesfo@fws.gov) with "Questa Mine Site RP/EA" in the subject line. If submitting requests electronically, please include name and mailing address.

After the Trustees consider public comments the Trustees will select a restoration alternative and finalize the RP/EA. A summary of public comments and the Trustees' responses to those comments will be included in the final RP/EA.

#### Tags:

Community Environment State

SHARE

#### Advertisements

**FALL**

**Whittier Wood Furniture** 10% OFF

**Flexsteel** 10% OFF

**Home Trends Design** 15% OFF

**Best Home Furnishings** 15% OFF

**CB FOX Furniture** 15% OFF

**OMNIA** 15% OFF

**SAVINGS**

BLACK FRIDAY BIGGEST SAVINGS OF THE YEAR

**CB FOX** / **Beautyrest**

**FREE Box Spring** Or **SAVE UP TO \$1000**

November 15-27th

**SHANNON corporation**

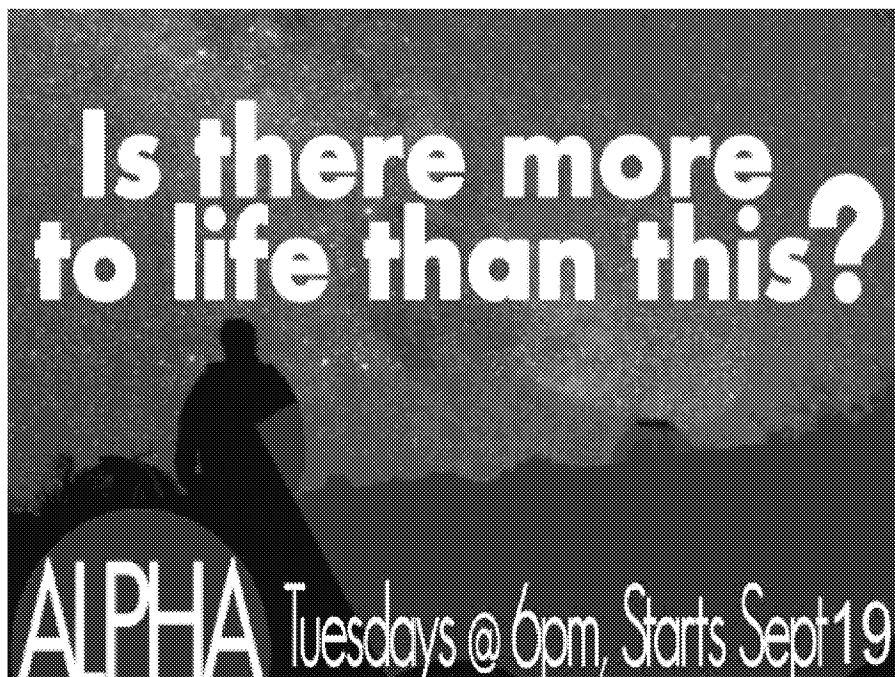
Two Beautiful Professional Offices located in Downtown Los Alamos

Includes private offices, kitchens and restrooms

1480sf and 1033sf

Please Call Shannon Corporation (505) 662-6000

# Is there more to life than this?



## ALPHA Tuesdays @ 6pm, Starts Sept 19

Listen. Discuss. Discover.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Church

### New Urgent Care in Los Alamos!



Robert McClees, MD, MBA • Edward Grant, MD • Ron Mamer, MD  
 1460 Trinity Drive • PH (505) 412-6033 • Fax (505) 412-6032  
[www.TrinityUrgentCare.net](http://www.TrinityUrgentCare.net) • Follow us on Facebook and Twitter  
 Onsite X-ray and Lab

**WE ARE NOW OPEN!**  
 9 a.m. - 7 p.m., 7 days a week  
 for your immediate medical care needs

Trinity Urgent Care provides up-to-date expert evaluation and treatment covering a wide range of minor emergencies, illnesses, and injuries.

#### THANKSGIVING WEEKEND SCHEDULE

11/22 Wed 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
 11/23 Closed for Thanksgiving  
 11/24 Friday open regular hours  
 11/25 Sat open regular hours  
 11/26 Sun open regular hours

## Newspaper Franchise Opportunities



**Call**  
**505.500.4232**

Advertisement



**GAMISS GAMISS**



**Shop Shop**

**INDICATION**  
 INVEGA TRIN (methylphenidate hydrochloride) is a prescription drug given by injection every 4 to 6 months by a health professional to treat schizophrenia. INVEGA TRIN is used in people who have been treated with INVEGA SUSTEN (methylphenidate hydrochloride) tablets.

**MANNM**  
**Medical Associates of**  
**Northern New Mexico**

**WALK-IN CLINIC**  
 Open To Patients 10 Years And Up  
**NEW HOURS**

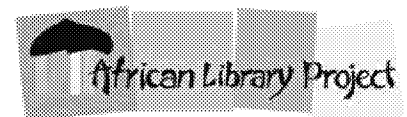
Walk-In Clinic Hours  
 Beginning December 4, 2017:  
 Monday-Friday  
 7:30am-6:00pm  
 Saturday:  
 8:00am-2:00pm  
 Sunday:  
 CLOSED

3917 West Road, Suite A  
 Los Alamos, NM 87544  
 (505) 661-6900  
[www.mannm.com](http://www.mannm.com)

## Kiwanis Club of Los Alamos

**Nov. 21**

Sharon Allen will speak on  
 the African Library Project.



**Meetings noon-1 pm**  
**Tuesdays**

**Trinity-On-The-Hill**  
**Episcopal Church**

**3900 Trinity Dr.**

**Visitors Welcome**

*To learn more about Kiwanis*

*Click Here*





*Celebrating  
50 Years of Service*



**Advocacy, Education,  
Prevention,  
Counseling and  
Treatment**

Call us at 505-662-3264  
or click here to visit  
our website

 **Aspen**  
COPIES  
& OFFICE SUPPLIES


**FedEx**  
Authorized  
ShipCenter



**Self Help Inc.**

(505) 662-4666  
 lash@qwestoffice.net  
 Monday - Friday  
 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 www.selfhelppla.org  
 Please call for appointment  
 Se habla Espanol

**Los Alamos Council on Cancer  
 Cancer Corner  
 Resource Center  
 at Los Alamos Medical Center**



- Try on free hats, wigs & scarves
- Support groups, seminars and cancer resources
- Techniques to make you look and feel better

Click here to visit us online

**FREE ADS & INEXPENSIVE  
 DISPLAY ADVERTISING in the  
 Trad'n Post**

**Pick up your copy at:**

LOS ALAMOS Chamber of Commerce, Co-Op Health Foods, Laundry, Los Alamos Hospital, Los Alamos Library, Metzer Mobile, Starbucks, Smith's Grocery, Totavi 66, Puye Cliffs  
 WHITEROCK Bandelier Grill, Metzer's Hardware (Mobile), Phillips 66, Smith's Grocery

**Serving New Mexico's "Universe Diverse"**  
 ESPANOLA, LOS ALAMOS, POJOAQUE, TAOS and WHITE ROCK



OVER 15,000  
 DISTRIBUTION

**Will Panzer, Publisher**  
 575-779-8829

will@tradnpost.co



Council, Boards & Commissions Calendar

Hilltopper Sports Scores from MacPrep

chamber button



Username \*

Password \*

[Log In using OpenID](#)

[Request new password](#)

Log in

---

**Follow us on:**

[Facebook](#)

[This site \(RSS\)](#)

[Twitter](#)

[YouTube](#)



Subscribe to your choice of breaking and/or daily news headlines.

---

Copyright © 2012-2017 Los Alamos Daily Post. This Site and all information contained here including, but not limited to, news stories, photographs, video, charts, graphs and graphics is the property of the Los Alamos Daily Post, unless otherwise noted. Permission to reprint in whole or in part is hereby granted, provided that the Los Alamos Daily Post and the author/photographer are properly cited. Opinions expressed by readers, columnists and other contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the Los Alamos Daily Post. The Los Alamos Daily Post was founded Feb. 7, 2012 by Owner/Publisher Carol A. Clark.

---



## New websites help fight 2 environmental problems

**By Keith Magill Executive Editor**

Posted Nov 26, 2017 at 7:12 PM

Updated Nov 26, 2017 at 7:12 PM

LSU researchers have launched websites to help track, study and control two environmental problems affecting Terrebonne, Lafourche and much of Louisiana.

Both are caused by invasive organisms:

- Giant salvinia, a fast-growing south American water weed once imported for use in ponds and aquariums, has for years clogged area waterways, interfering with boat traffic. The thick mats prevent sunlight from penetrating the water, affecting native vegetation, fish and waterfowl.
- Roseau cane scale, an east Asian mealybug, eats and destroys the tall stalks that scientists say help trap sediment that builds marshes and holds them together. Scientists say losing the cane could hamper the marshes' ability to protect inland communities from Gulf of Mexico tides and storm surges. The bug was found in Plaquemines last year and has since spread to 13 parishes, including Terrebonne and Lafourche, where it was found in June.

Researchers have fought salvinia with a weevil that eats the plants, raising some of the bugs at sites in Terrebonne and Lafourche. The problem weed showed up in Terrebonne and a handful of other spots around the state in 2000 and has since spread to almost every parish.

LSU AgCenter officials say a new website, \_\_\_\_\_, will help educate residents about the problem and ways to help fight it.

“The purpose of the website is to have a central hub for information,” AgCenter entomologist Rodrigo Diaz said in a news release.

Images and maps show how the aquatic plant has spread across Louisiana waterways. The site offers tips for identifying the weed and for finding and introducing the weevils that control it.

“Managing giant salvinia with biological control requires monitoring the population of weevils and salvinia conditions,” Diaz said. “We hope this website will be useful not only for plant managers but also people who enjoy wetlands.”

So far, the state has had no luck finding something that will prevent and kill off the scale insect that is killing roseau cane in coastal marshes. In September, the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Department issued these \_\_\_\_\_:

- Do not transport roseau cane.
- Do not tie up boats to roseau cane.
- Make sure you remove any roseau cane debris from boats prior to leaving boat launches and marinas.
- Wash with soapy water and drain boats at or near marinas to kill any scales.

“It is important for our stakeholders not only to learn how to prevent the movement of infested roseau cane but also how to recognize roseau cane, the exotic scale and die-off symptoms,” Diaz said.

That’s one goal of the second website, \_\_\_\_\_.

The site includes the voluntary control guidelines and instructions on how to report sightings of the scale insect to help researchers monitor its range.

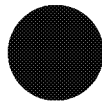
It also includes a management plan for a long-range study of the problem. Officials are trying to secure state and federal money for the project.

“The website provides up-to-date information on the distribution of the scale in coastal Louisiana and descriptions of the work being done to understand the scale and its impact on the marsh,” said Ian Knight, a postdoctoral associate at the LSU AgCenter. “We hope to provide updates and additional information as our research progresses.”

-- Executive Editor Keith Magill can be reached at 857-2201 or

..... Follow him on Twitter

.....



### **SIGN UP FOR DAILY E-MAIL**

Wake up to the day's top news, delivered to your inbox



[http://www.tulsaworld.com/communities/owasso/news/communitynews/owasso-resident-organization-win-kob-environmental-excellence-awards/article\\_74961a5f-296e-5038-a3bd-d2f4500482a5.html](http://www.tulsaworld.com/communities/owasso/news/communitynews/owasso-resident-organization-win-kob-environmental-excellence-awards/article_74961a5f-296e-5038-a3bd-d2f4500482a5.html)

## Owasso resident, organization win KOB environmental excellence awards

From Staff Reports 22 hrs ago



(L-R) Chris Coager, Jerry Fowler, Lori Lane, Patricia Hardy, Only Russell, and Jeff Cannon, members of Owasso Strong Neighborhood Initiative. Courtesy photo

Buy Now

Owasso resident Patricia Hardy and the Owasso Strong Neighborhood Initiative (OSNI) have been recognized by Keep Oklahoma Beautiful (KOB) for their outstanding efforts in beautifying the community.

On Saturday, Nov. 18, KOB hosted its 27th annual Environmental Excellence Celebration, which celebrates the work of governments, businesses, organizations and individuals doing their part to keep Oklahoma beautiful.

Hardy was named an Affiliate Champion, an award presented to champion volunteers with KOB Affiliate organizations. In 2010, she registered her cul-de-sac as a Neighborhood Network with OSNI as one of the first neighborhoods. Over the last seven years, Hardy has been a leader for neighborhood cleanups and general beautification projects around their park and pond. She also worked with other neighborhood leaders and OSNI and Owasso Police to establish an Alert Neighborhood Program for their neighborhood.

"It is an honor to have been a member since the very inception of the OSNI Owasso CARES," Hardy said. "This group is comprised of volunteers who give of themselves to improve this wonderful city that we live in. We are a positive voice and only seek to make a difference in our neighborhoods."

Owasso Neighborhood Coordinator Jerry Fowler added, "It is a wonderful honor for one of our own to be recognized on a state level when there is so many people across Oklahoma making a difference in their communities. Patricia has been one of our biggest advocates of OSNI and Owasso CARES since their beginning."

OSNI was also recognized for its efforts, being named the winner in the Government, Service Population <40,000 category. This marks the fifth year of the last six that the organization has been chosen as a winner in at least one category.

OSNI has developed volunteer programs such as Owasso CARES and Keep Owasso Clean, neighborhood leadership conferences and workshops, and neighborhood grants to encourage citizens to take an active role in their community for the purpose of sustainability and to prevent neighborhoods from deteriorating. It serves nearly 35,000 people in Owasso's population and works to beautify its more than 16 square miles of city land.

"It is a tribute to our City team, Owasso CARES leaders and all of our volunteers for their dedication and support of this initiative and the impact it is having in our community," Fowler said. "We don't do what we do in Owasso for the awards; however, it feels like this year's award solidifies the vision and dedication of our leadership team and the love for our community."

Keep Oklahoma Beautiful is a statewide nonprofit with a mission to empower Oklahoma citizens to preserve and enhance the state's natural beauty and ensure a healthy, sustainable environment. For more information about KOB, a complete list of award winning programs and how you can participate, visit: [keepoklahomabeautiful.com](http://keepoklahomabeautiful.com).

[President Trump to talk taxes in St. Charles](#)
[Learn More](#)

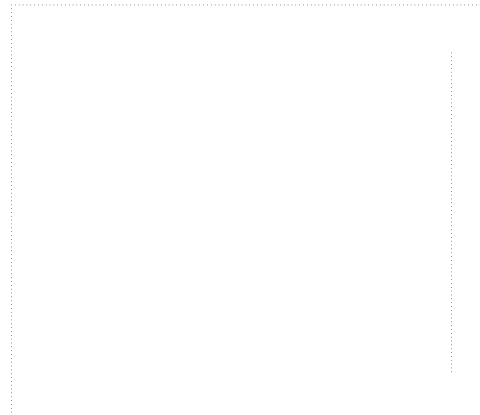
## Scott Pruitt on a mission to change the culture of the EPA

Pruitt on a mission to change the EPA's culture

**RELATED TOPICS:** [EPA](#) | [Scott Pruitt](#) | [Obama](#) | [Washington](#) | [Congress](#) | [Mitch McConnell](#)



WASHINGTON — EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt isn't just dismantling the Clean Power Plan and other high-profile environmental programs of the Obama era. He's on a mission to re-engineer the agency's culture by returning power to states and away from the Washington bureaucrats and coastal elites he said have led it astray.



The EPA, for example, is doing away with the "sue-and-settle" approach that Pruitt said improperly allowed the Obama administration to circumvent laws by rewriting regulations behind closed doors with friendly environmental groups who filed lawsuits.

The agency also has rewritten membership rules for the agency's advisory boards, so that both industry advocates and academics from Midwestern and Mountain states — which Pruitt said were under-represented — have greater influence when counseling agency leaders on new rules.

And he's adopted a "red team/blue team" model designed to challenge climate change assumptions that global warming is occurring and humans are the primary cause — a view endorsed both by the vast majority of scientists and by a massive federal report the White House issued earlier this month.

Pruitt, who challenged the Clean Power Plan as Oklahoma attorney general, said he's plowing ahead

with the rollback of the rule designed to curb carbon emissions from coal-fired power plants despite the report's conclusions.

And he said the red team/blue team approach that promotes "curious inquiry and continued analysis" is integral to the rigorous self-analysis he believes the EPA has been lacking in recent years.

"I'm an attorney. I believe in bringing people together in an open process to encourage peer review, that's what science is," Pruitt said during a recent interview in his office. "We shouldn't run from that ... That's something we ought to embrace as a culture and I think as an agency."

## Red Team/Blue Team

Of all Pruitt's moves to reshape an agency whose authority he frequently challenged in court, the red team/blue team strategy has raised some of the loudest alarm bells among his many critics who consider it an attack on settled science.

The exercise was designed at the height of the Cold War to assess Soviet reactions to various scenarios. And that's where it belongs — not to relitigate the proven facts of climate science, said former New Jersey GOP Gov. Christine Todd Whitman, who served as EPA administrator under George W. Bush.

"That Mr. Pruitt seeks to use the power of the EPA to elevate those who have already lost the argument is shameful, and the only outcome will be that the public will know less about the science of climate change than before," she wrote in a [opinion column](#) for *The New York Times* entitled "How not to run the EPA"

Ken Cuccinelli, a Pruitt ally and former Republican attorney general from Virginia, said the EPA administrator rightly believes the agency needs to return to its roots and abandon quixotic pursuits Obama conducted on global warming embodied by the Clean Power Plan and the decision to sign on to the international treaty known as the [Paris Accord](#).



Former Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli defends how Scott Pruitt is running the EPA.

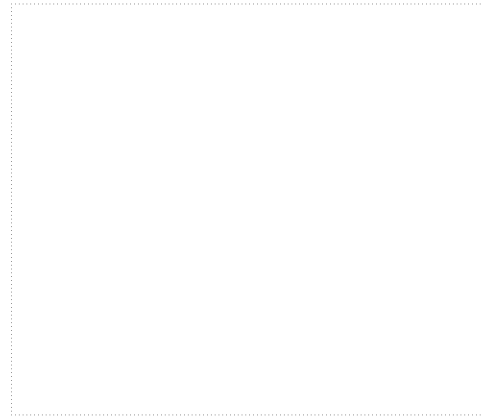
"The previous administration weaponized this agency," Cuccinelli said. "They were assaulting America through the EPA. Scott believes in clean water and clean air. There's never been any doubt about that. But all of the other creative stuff is the kind of stuff that political elites want to spend their time on and if it affects Americans all it does is reduce their opportunities."



## Changing a culture

Pruitt arrived at EPA under a mutual cloud of hostility.

He had sued the agency 14 times on behalf of Oklahoma challenging a variety of regulations and billing himself as “a leading activist against EPA’s activist agenda.” A month after he took the helm in February, the budget released by President Trump, an ardent EPA critic, proposed gutting the \$8.2 billion agency by nearly a third.



In turn, Pruitt was opposed loudly by hundreds of former EPA employees, and more quietly by some current ones. They feared he would assist the petrochemical industry he grew close to in Oklahoma while ignoring the carefully constructed science that served as the foundation of many public health protections.

Subsequent cuts in pollution enforcement and the departure of hundreds of veteran EPA staffers through a buyout program have given environmental groups more reason to worry.

Nearly a year into his tenure, Pruitt still feels the resistance from employees who have yet to buy into his message that the EPA ought to work more with business to find mutually acceptable solutions when it comes to public health.

“The most challenging thing that we encounter (at EPA) is this thinking, this attitude that we as a country have to choose between growth and jobs and being good stewards of our environment,” he recently told an audience at the conservative Federalist Society National Lawyers Convention. “We can do both. But the past few years, we’ve been told it’s prohibition, it’s put up a fence, it’s do not touch. And frankly I don’t think that’s consistent with the law. I don’t think that’s consistent with how we’ve done business as a country.”

His many critics say that’s code for giving the energy industry and other polluters carte blanche to maximize profit with little regard for environmental damage.

Normally soft-spoken Delaware Sen. Tom Carper, the top Democrat on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, described Pruitt during his confirmation process earlier this year as “hostile to the basic protections to keep Americans and our environment safe.”

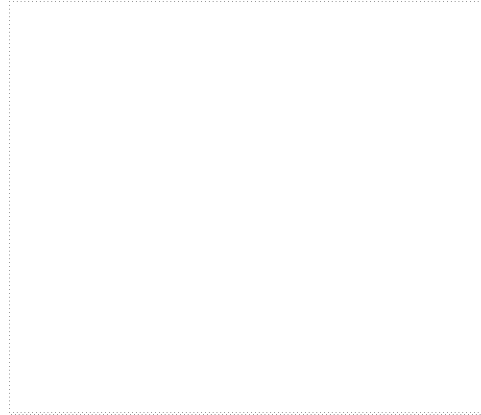
### A look at EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt



Pruitt speaks during the daily press briefing at the White House on June 2, 2017.

## Back to basics

As part of his effort to change the culture at EPA, Pruitt is touting a “back-to-basics” agenda that emphasizes partnerships with states and issues he calls central to the agency’s mission when Congress created it in 1970.



He’s prioritizing cleanup of toxic Superfund sites, lead-tainted drinking water systems, and abandoned mines.

Those issues, he said, took a back seat the previous eight years as the Obama administration engaged in regulatory over-reach on climate change and the “Waters of the U.S.” rule that spelled out that streams, rivers and other bodies can be regulated by the federal government.

**More:** [Pruitt moves to shake up EPA advisory boards, further antagonizing environmental activists](#)

**More:** [Exclusive: EPA’s Pruitt vows to continue rolling back rules despite alarming climate report](#)

**More:** [Rollback of Clean Power Plan rule by EPA Administrator Pruitt won’t happen overnight](#)

“Our job is to administer statutes,” he said in the interview. “We have to act based on the authority given to us by Congress. When this agency and other agencies in the past have gone askew is when they’ve created and filled in the vacuum. That’s what they did with the Clean Power Plan ... We’re correcting that.”

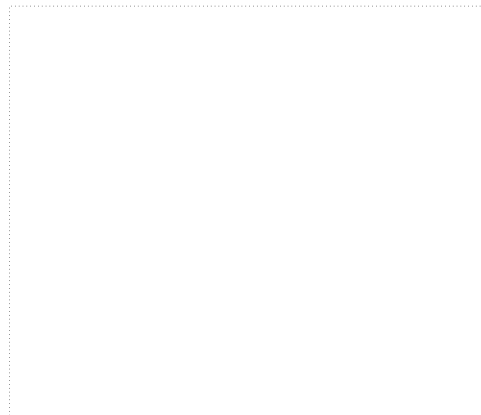
Pruitt points to Superfund as an area that previous administrators should have taken more time to address. He’s visited a lead-contaminated site in East Chicago, Ind., and the Gold King mine in Colorado (where a mistake by an EPA contractor in 2015 led to a major spill) to emphasize the program’s importance.

He often talks about the problems at the West Lake Landfill near St. Louis and how the EPA still hasn’t decided how to proceed 27 years after it was tagged as a Superfund site.

“Not clean it up. Not fix the problem. But just simply decide,” he told the Federalist Society.

More than half of the original 406 sites from 1983 remain on the [list](#). On average, it takes about 19 years for a site to be removed from the list, according to the Government Accountability Office.

Gina McCarthy, who served as EPA administrator during Obama’s second term, brushed aside the notion that Superfund was not a priority under her watch. And she said Pruitt’s view of his agency’s role is so narrow it’s imperiling public health.





Former EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy.

"It is just ridiculous to think that you can ignore the most significant threats to public health today while chasing Superfund sites that have been around for 20 years," she said. "You don't make those choices. You do both."

She said Pruitt's plan to address the nation's most toxic sites will be much tougher if Congress goes along with Trump's 2018 budget proposal to slash by \$330 million the nearly \$1.1 billion Superfund received this year.

"The challenge has been resources constraints," she said. "So for an administrator to say he's going back to basics and even caring about doing a better job with Superfund while he's defending a budget that would dismantle the agency and reduce Superfund, it doesn't seem like a very consistent message to me."

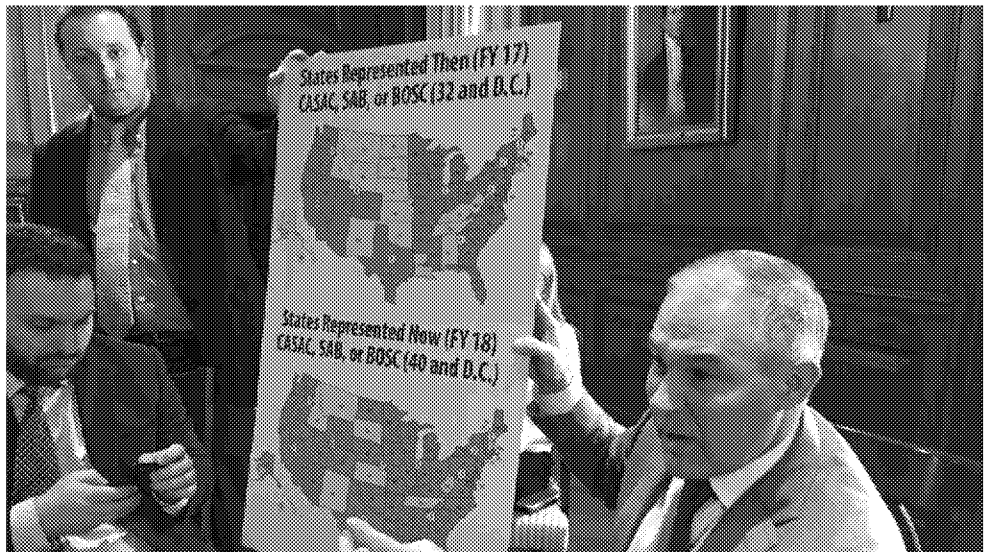
## Federalism

Cuccinelli acknowledges that it is an odd pairing to have Pruitt, someone from "fly-over country," heading an agency "favored by the cocktail party set."

But he thinks it will take someone like the Kentucky-born, former Cincinnati Reds baseball prospect to shake up an agency in need of cultural re-orientation.

"God forbid we have an administrator of the EPA who thinks it's important to obey the law and Scott does," he said.

Pruitt doesn't use the term political elites when he describes his predecessors at the EPA but it's clear he considers himself someone attuned to the needs of states, especially the red ones that resented much of the Obama environmental agenda.



EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt holds up a poster showing how his planned changes to the makeup of three key advisory committees will be more geographically diverse.

It's one reason he took the unprecedented step last month of barring scientists who receive EPA

As one reason, he took the unprecedented step last month of cutting scientists who receive EPA grants from serving on any of the agency's nearly two dozen advisory boards. The move to eliminate what Pruitt described as "political science" opened up seats for researchers representing industries and institutions based in the middle of the country whose input he said hasn't always been valued.

Robert Johnson, an economics professor at Clark University in Massachusetts and a past member of the EPA Science Advisory Board, criticized Pruitt's decision.

The advisory board "has always been bastion of truth and independent scientific advice that withstood changes in political administrations and differences of political opinion," Johnson. "That changed (with Pruitt's act)."

Pruitt also speaks of the importance of restoring "federalism" where states have an equal seat at the table when it comes to implementing clean air and water programs.

McCarthy pushed back on his interpretation.

"Federalism does not mean that the agency doesn't do its work in accordance with Congress. And Congress, on issues like the Clean Air Act, did not give states the role of primacy," she said.

Nonetheless, members of Congress who clashed with Obama are clearly delighted that Pruitt is driving an agenda that many of their constituents back home like.

When Pruitt last month told an audience of coal miners in Hazard, Ky., that "the war on coal is over" as he announced the administration's plan to repeal the Clean Power Plan, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., seemed clearly tickled.

"It's great to have an administrator of the EPA," McConnell said as he introduced Pruitt, "who's not afraid to come to Kentucky."

Copyright 2017 USATODAY.com

#### From The Web

Sponsored Links by Taboola

Hollywood Actress Tells All: "I Hope My Story Will Help Other Women"

ActivatedYou

In Real Life, These "Big Bang Theory" Stars Look So Much Different

EternalLifeStyle

Malia Obama's New Car Is Disgusting

Journalistate

Bitcoin Expert Reveals 3-Step Secret To Retire Rich

Choose Yourself Financial, LLC

Facts You Never Knew About Nadia Comaneci

SportsRetriever

Are You Smart Enough To Ace This Basic Knowledge Quiz?

Definition

Shoppers Are Getting Unbelievable Deals With This Little-Known Site

Tophatter

Homecoming King Stuns Crowd When He Immediately Turns And Gives His Crown Away

Life Buzz

The Upgrade For Gmail That Most People Don't Know

Boomerang for Gmail

### The Most Daring Red Carpet Gowns of 2017

Livingly

### 18 Pets Who Realized They're Going To The Vet

Give It Love

### 17 Car Cleaning Tricks Local Dealers Don't Want You to Know

KiwiReport

### You should never shop on Amazon without using this trick – here's why

Honey

### Don't buy an electric toothbrush before seeing this limited promotion!

quip

### Texas: Best & Worst Refinance Mortgage Companies of 2017

Comparisons.org

### 20 Human Foods Deadly to Dogs!

Fallbrook247.com

### This Is Why Everyone Should Start Pouring Soda In The Toilet

Her Moments

### North Korea Keeps These Photos Hidden For A Good Reason...

The Design Inspiration